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"NOW, IS THE ACCEPTED TIME."

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"*Now*," is the voice that Nature breathes
To those her lore who heed,—
The changeful cloud, the fleeting beam,
The fading rose, the unresting stream,
Confirm her warning creed.

"*Now*," is the word that Wisdom writes
On palace, hall and bower;—
The buried past from hope is free,—
The future—what is that to thee?
Improve the present hour.

"*Now*," saith the Spirit from on high,—
"*Now*," saith a Page sublime,—
To-morrow hath its load of cares,
To-morrow's hand no promise bears
Of the accepted time.

"*Now*," though another morn may rise
In purple and in gold,
Thine eye made dim by failing breath,
And shrouded in the dust of death,
May not its light behold.

"*Now*,"—not to-morrow,—Oh, my soul,
Obey thy Maker's call,
Lest darkly on the scroll of fate
Stand forth the fearful doom—*too late*—
And thou be reft of all.

Washington, May 1st, 1858.

BLANCHE BERTRAND;

OR,

PERILS OF THE BORDER.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEATH-BLOW.

Had a thunderbolt fallen from a cloudless sky, Eugene could not have been more astonished than at again finding himself, in spite of all his precautions, so suddenly in the power of his natural foes. Whence could they have come? He glanced quickly around him, as he somewhat mechanically gave his hand to the Indian who addressed him, and the mystery was at once explained.

In the direction toward which he had turned his back, there was a small clump of bushes, beyond which was a large spreading tree, from whose branches depended a long, thick, clustering vine; and the Indians being, as they must have been, in the vicinity at the moment of the report of his rifle, had thus been able to discover his position without being seen themselves; and by tracing him with their eyes to the rock where the fire had been kindled, they had easily succeeded in getting the tree, vine, and bush in a direct line with their approach to him; so that, even though looking cautiously and guardedly about him, they had, in their silent and stealthy manner, been enabled to advance, single file, unperceived, to within a distance of less than a hundred feet—from whence, while his attention had been occupied with his food, it had been an easy matter for them to come upon him unawares.

We say Eugene gave his hand somewhat mechanically to the spokesman of the party; yet, while in the act of doing so, he had not only, as already mentioned, solved the mystery of their approach, but, with the same quick, eager glance, had perceived that the rifle by his side had already been withdrawn, and was in the possession of another, and that therefore there were no means of resistance on his part, setting aside even the hope of escape.

Fortune seemed truly the battledoor and himself the shuttle cock; the same unexpected turn in his fate which had more than once given hope to his despair, had again brought despair to his hope; and he now mentally groaned at the thought that he was again in the power of beings from whom he could expect no mercy, and from whom there now seemed to him not the faintest possibility of escape.

As for the negro, his conduct meantime was quite characteristic of himself. While deeply engaged in ravenously devouring his portion of the food—neither perceiving, nor scarcely thinking of, danger—the voice of the savage who addressed Eugene fell upon his ear. Looking quickly around, and discovering the grim faces of his most dreaded foes, his eyes suddenly enlarged to their greatest dimensions; and dropping the half-devoured turkey on one side of him, and uttering a yell that quite astonished the Indians, he threw himself backward, rolled completely off the rock, and fell at the feet of an unsympathizing warrior. Here, shutting his eyes, with some awful contortions of countenance, and several spasmodic contractions of his nerves, he opened his well-filled mouth, and began bellowing, "help! murder! fire!" till that aperture of his face was still further crammed by having the muzzle of a gun somewhat rudely thrust into it. This stopped his clamor, and enabled him to recover from his first terrible fright; whereupon, perceiving from the conduct of the savages that neither he nor Eugene, who was in the act of shaking hands with each of the party, was in danger of being immediately killed, he quickly gathered himself upon his feet, and, with an obsequiousness quite ludicrous, began to shake hands vigorously with his captors also; and to every observation of theirs of, "How de do, brudder?" he replied, eagerly:

"I's 'siderable well, masser, I is, and hopes you is youseff. I's a little bit skeered just now, at seeing so many un'spected gentlem'; but dat's nuffin, dat isn't; I's all ober dat now, since I knows who you is."

Whether the Indians understood him or not, they seemed to be a good deal amused; and more than one patted his woolly cranium, and observed:

"Brudder much wool got—brudder much black—no paint brudder for burn."

THE CAPTIVE.

This last was an allusion to a general custom among the different tribes at that day, of painting black such prisoners as the Grand Council had decreed to the awful doom of being burned alive at the stake—an allusion which Duke so far comprehended as to consider not the most pleasant in the world—though he still continued to grin and show his white teeth, and seem more happy than he felt.

That this was the same party from which at such terrible risk to himself, he had taken a rifle during the night, Eugene soon had reason to know; for scarcely had the Indians concluded their friendly amusement of claiming fraternal relationship, than the one to whom the piece in question had been immediately passed, and who was without other weapons of the same kind, walked quietly up to him, and, looking him fiercely in the eye, at the same time grasping the barrel with one hand and striking it with the other, said:

"Long Knife* steal Injun gun—run—get away—good! Injun great warrior—brave—cunning—find trail—run faster—catch Long Knife—get gun back—good! Long Knife come with Injun—no more steal gun."

Saying this, he struck his breast some two or three times, with an air of dignity, and turned haughtily away.

The whole party, as Eugene now scanned them in the clear light of day, appeared scarcely more prepossessing than by the light of their camp-fire. From the fact of their being well armed and most savagely painted; their dusky limbs, bodies, and faces hideously streaked with different colors; their scalp locks carefully plaited, and ornamented with tufts of feathers; the absence of all superfluous clothing—the breech cloths only being girded around their loins; here and there one with a rather fresh-looking scalp dangling at his girdle; from all this, we say, Eugene very naturally came to the conclusion that these were warriors who had equipped themselves for a warlike expedition; and who probably had been successful to a certain degree—perhaps in surprising some unguarded settler, and murdering him and his family—but without either procuring, or at least bringing with them, any weighty plunder. Taking into consideration also the different parties, besides this, which he knew to be abroad in different directions—together with many, it might be inferred, which he had not seen—and it required no great stretch of the imagination on his part, to people the great forest with his savage foes—or to believe that, even if free again, there would be little chance for him to escape—or, furthermore, that any body of whites, short of a small army, could pass through the forest undetected and unsurprised. And with this came the thought of Blanche, and the hopelessness of her captivity, when he could neither get away to communicate her situation to her friends, nor they even reach her except in greater numbers than any of the nearest stations might be able to spare.

Up to the present time, probably owing to the fact that his first captors had obtained sufficient spoil without further molestation, Eugene had been permitted to retain his garments; but the party in question was not long in showing a disposition to ornament their persons at the expense of himself and the black.

As the owner of the rifle turned away, another Indian walked up to our hero, and quietly took the covering from his head—a handkerchief merely, something in the form of a turban, which, on the day following his capture, Eugene had bound around his wound, and had since worn in place of his hat. This the savage, after a slight examination, placed upon his own head, and said, as he strutted away:

"Injun try him so."

But the article in question did not apparently suit his phrenological developments; for after changing its position a few times, and exciting the laughter of his companions, he threw it down, with a grunt of contempt.

A second now approached, and signified that he wanted his coat; and as Eugene obligingly threw off the garment, the savage thrust his painted arms into it, and seemed quite proud of his new appearance. A third required his waistcoat, and a fourth his shirt—the others in the meantime serving the negro in the same manner.

Having thus almost disrobed their prisoners, the Indians seemed content to leave them the remainder of their clothing; but as each had placed a single article upon his person, the appearance of the whole party was so extremely ludicrous, that, in spite of all his troubles, and the awful situation in which he found himself placed, Eugene was compelled to laugh; perceiving which, the savages laughed also; and for a time a stranger might have mistaken the whole number, prisoners and captors, for a party of most congenial friends.

But the laughter of Eugene was of brief duration—for it was an external effect, which came not from the heart, and produced no feeling of joyousness; and the merriment of the others was as the mirth of the executioner while preparing his victim for the fatal blow. This Eugene knew; and the moment his laughter ceased, he felt most painfully the reaction of a deep depression; and a keen pang shot through his heart, as he remembered how light had been his seeming while the being he loved was an almost hopeless captive, and himself, to say nothing worse, beyond the power of rendering her any assistance whatever.

The Indians now set off in an opposite direction to that which Eugene had been pursuing, taking their prisoners with them, and marching them in the center of their body, but otherwise leaving them free.

On they moved through the great forest, beneath deep, solemn arches of interlocking trees and festooning vines, and surrounded by a thousand beauties, if only viewed by a poetic eye removed from the sense of peril.

For hours they continued their steady march in what Eugene supposed to be a northerly direction, resuming their natural taciturnity and dignified demeanor, scarcely exchanging a word with each other, and only now and then speaking to their captives, to give some order in the broken English which a large number of the natives of that day could use, owing principally to their intimate connection with the British agents of the northern frontier posts.

Somewhere about the middle of the afternoon they shot a deer, which they proceeded to dress, divide, and assign to their prisoners to carry—Eugene and the negro in this respect being equal.

Continuing on till about sunset, they selected their camp in a pleasant little valley, near a running stream. Here the negro was ordered to build a fire and cook the meat for the party—the Indians throwing themselves upon the ground—with Eugene, still unbound, but carefully guarded, among them—and seeming to enjoy their present indolence in a high degree.

As soon as the meat was prepared, which was done by roasting, the savages fell to heartily, not forgetting to let their captives share equally and eat at the same time; and this, together with the fact that he had not as yet been bound at all, Eugene considered as a favorable indication that, notwithstanding his taking of the rifle, he was not regarded in a vindictive light; and from this he began once more to build some hopes of escape.

But whatever hopes he might have formed upon so slight a foundation, were almost immediately destroyed by the sudden appearance of two more Indians, who came gliding quietly into camp, and whom he at a single glance recognized as two of the guard left with the renegade. And with the recognition he at once comprehended how and why they were here. They had, he rightly conjectured, set off upon his trail as soon as light, and followed him to the other camp, where the several different trails must have perplexed them not a little, though not sufficiently to throw them from the direct pursuit, which had been continued all day, and crowned with success at dusk.

There were no expressions of astonishment from the party in camp at the appearance of the newcomers, and nothing in the looks and manner of any to indicate that they were not expected. With the slightest nod or grunt of recognition, the two advanced and seated themselves among the others, scarcely glancing at the prisoners at all. A deep silence of perhaps a minute followed: then he who seemed to be leader or chief of the larger party, ordered Duke, in the best English at his command, to set before his guests the remainder of the roasted deer. The black obeyed, but trembled violently while doing so—for he, like Eugene, had recognized the new-comers at a glance, and reasoned that their presence here would result in no good to either his young master or himself, and that both hereafter might expect to receive no gentler treatment for their daring attempt at escape.

While the guests, who seemed to take no notice of the agitation of Duke, were silently engaged in disposing of the food placed before them, Eugene somewhat mechanically fixed his eyes upon their grim faces, but allowed his mind to wander to the point where he had seen them last. By a natural train of association his thoughts were carried to her in whose presence they had stood since he, with the hope of liberty before him, the hope of returning for her salvation, had mentally bidden her farewell for a time.

What of her now? What of the proud, the high-born, the beautiful, the heroic, and, above all, the deeply-loved Blanche? How had she passed the night? What had been her feelings at learning of his escape? What had been her hopes and fears, on finding him gone, and seeing that he was about to be pursued? And, more than all, what had been the effect of his escape in the treatment of herself by the disappointed and angry beings who held her in their power? These were questions which arose in his mind and gave him mental pain; and these were questions he would have eagerly propounded to the savages before him, could he for a single moment have hoped for a reasonable answer.

All remained quiet and silent on both sides, until the new-comers had finished their meal; when the same Indian who had ordered food to be placed before them, produced a well-filled pipe; and having lighted it, and drawn a few whiffs himself, he passed it to his nearest guest; who repeated the operation, and passed it in the same manner to the next: thus it went around the circle; and not until it had returned to the chief of the party, was the silence broken.

This we may remark, *en passant*, was a kind of ceremonious reception more generally observed by large bodies in general council, than by small parties meeting in this way; but the forest natives, like their more civilized foes, were often governed by an impulse or a whim—so that parties sometimes met with great formality, and sometimes with none at all, according to the different moods or circumstances governing them at the time. The native Indian, we may further observe, was not, as some suppose, wanting in inquisitiveness; but he was generally able, through early training, to conceal his internal feelings and emotions, so as externally to appear perfectly indifferent concerning matters of which he was most eager to gain a knowledge.

It was not, therefore, on the present occasion, till the new-comers had finished their meal, and the pipe had been passed around in the manner stated, that they opened their lips to communicate the object of their visit; but immediately on the conclusion of the ceremony, one of the two arose, with an air of dignity, and spoke rapidly for a few minutes in the Indian tongue.

Eugene of course could not understand what he said; but from his gestures, and the fierce looks occasionally directed toward himself and the black, he was at no loss to comprehend that the communication related to their escape, and that the speaker, in behalf of the party he represented, claimed him and the negro as runaways belonging still to their original captors.

As the speaker concluded, he resumed his seat in the circle, and was followed by another of the opposite party; after which there was a general consultation, and the matter quietly settled in favor of the claimants.

As soon as this decision had been arrived at, the first speaker advanced to Eugene—who, during all this time, had been sitting a little apart, though not enough so to make it a safe venture for him to again attempt escape by flight—and, after looking him fiercely in the eye for a moment, said:

"Long Knife run away. But Methoto great warrior—he catch Long Knife—he punish."

As he said this, standing over Eugene, who was quietly and inoffensively looking up in his savage face, he suddenly bent downward, and, with the flat of his hand, struck him a blow on the left temple, stretching him out upon the earth, though confusing rather than stunning him.

Instantly the blood of the young Virginian was fired; he had, without provocation, been struck a foul blow; and even though it came from a savage, it was an insult not to be forgiven. Controling, however, his first passionate impulse, he quietly gathered himself upon his feet, and for a moment stood meekly before his captor, who again said, in a haughty tone, with a gutteral harshness:

"Methoto more punish."

But this threat was his last; for scarcely had the words passed his lips, when, seeming altogether to lose sight of time, place, and consequences, Eugene, with a yell that startled the savages around him, and rung afar through the great forest, suddenly sprung upon his foe, like a panther upon its prey. Clutching the throat of the savage with one hand, and the haft of a knife in his belt with the other, he whipped out the glittering steel, whirled it aloft, and, with one quick, impetuous, lightning stroke—a stroke whose velocity, combined with the suddenness of the assault, gave the Indian no opportunity to parry—drove it up to the hilt through his very heart.

The whole affair was the work of a moment, and was done ere Eugene fairly comprehended what he was doing. He had been governed by a wild, almost insane impulse, and had acted without deliberation or consideration. True, when the blow of the savage laid him out upon the earth, his blood had been fired for the moment; but the next moment he had been able to so control his feelings as to quietly get upon his feet; though with some dim idea whirling through his brain, that, should the insult be repeated, or even an attempt be made to repeat it, it would be the death-signal of one or both. The blow, as we have seen, was not repeated; but the threat, in itself a fresh insult, showed that the design of repetition was in the heart of the savage; and the consequence so quickly following was the natural result of passion, impulse and opportunity.

Time is not always measured by duration. There are moments in which thought seems to grasp so much of the past, that we apparently live long in a single oscillation of the pendulum. So it was with our hero in the present instance. As he drew forth the knife, and beheld Methoto sinking down almost without a groan, and heard the yells of surprise with which the other savages started to their feet, a thousand thoughts seemed to flash upon him in an instant, of what had gone before, with a comprehension of what he had done, and the awful consequences which must surely follow, unless he could make his escape. By a single impulsive act he had passed the Rubicon of hope if he remained; and death, quick and violent, or death by slow and lingering tortures, would certainly ensue. There was no time to think; and yet, as we have said, in the twinkling of an eye, his mind grasped a thousand thoughts; and among them more vivid than any other, the thought of escape.

Could he escape? Till this moment such an idea had not even crossed his brain; and the moment before he would have regarded it as the most wild and insane of suggestions—doomed, by trial, to result in certain capture or certain death; but he knew it was death now, unless the attempt were made, and nothing worse than death could follow.

He glanced quickly around him. It was already near the close of twilight; objects at a short distance could only be dimly seen, except by the light of the fire; the great forest around was nearly enveloped in darkness; a few minutes more, and the eye would scarcely be able to distinguish anything; the nearest of his foes was at least six feet from him; and again acting from the same impulse that had brought about the death of Methoto, he suddenly seized the rifle of the falling warrior, and bounded away like a startled deer.

So sudden indeed was this movement, that Eugene was able to gain a start of some ten or fifteen feet, ere his enemies seemed to fairly comprehend that he was leaving them. Then, uttering the most terrible yells of rage and vengeance, they poured after him a volley, and simultaneously darted forward in pursuit.

But fickle fortune had again changed in his favor, and their fell design was brought to a speedy termination in a most unexpected and terrible manner; for scarcely had their pieces spoken, and with their yells yet reverberating through the great, dark forest, when another volley was poured in upon them, accompanied by yells as wild and terrible as their own, and uttered by beings scarcely less savage, quite as vindictive, but of another and a conquering race.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BACKWARD TRAIL.

Eugene had fled perhaps a hundred yards before he clearly comprehended that an attack had been

* A term almost universally applied by the Indians of that day to the Virginians and Kentuckians.

made upon his enemies by a party speaking the same language as himself. Then, turning the trunk of a gigantic oak, he stopped and listened to the yells, shrieks, groans, and trampling, clashing sounds of strife, his heart wildly beating with hope, but almost afraid to credit his senses, lest he should suddenly awake, as from a dream, and find it all a delusion.

It was no dream, however, but a stern and bloody reality; for the Indians had suddenly been assailed by a small party of whites, of about their own number; and being completely taken by surprise, with their pieces just discharged—and one being killed and three wounded by the first volley of their enemies—there was not even a possibility of their making a successful resistance. In fact they did not attempt it; but those who could, turned quickly from their foes, to conceal themselves in the darkness of the surrounding wood; yet so fierce was the onset, and so close their enemies, that only two succeeded in making their escape—the others being all slain, and even scalped, in less than five minutes from the opening fire.

The affray—if affray it could be called, when the action was confined almost entirely to one side—ended in a complete triumph of the assailants; who had thus taken signal vengeance upon some six or eight of their hated enemies, without the loss of a single man, and with only one or two very slightly wounded.

The noise of the conflict had been more like that of so many wild beasts, or what we generally conceive of demons, than of anything human; and as soon as it was over—and the different parties, blood-stained, and with the reeking scalps of their slaughtered foes in their possession, had collected around the fire of the camp—they sent up a shout in honor of their victory and "Old Kaintuck," which resounded afar through the great forest, and added speed to the flight of those who had in turn become flying fugitives.

"That's the way to gin it to the red niggers!" said one, boastfully; "and now whar's him as struck the fust blow?"

"Here!" called out Eugene, as he hastily quitted his position behind the tree, which he had quietly kept till this moment.

As he advanced to the fire, he beheld eight individuals, in the rough costume of the border, standing near together, most of them leaning upon their rifles, and all eyes fixed in the direction of his approach; and the moment he had fairly come into view, one of the group bounded quickly forward, exclaiming:

"By the eternal thunders! ef it arn't the Cap'n himself, may this here rifle o' mine never blow another devil to the place whar he come from fust!"

"Why, Seth Harper," fairly shouted Eugene, as he grasped the rough hand of the boatman, "is this really you, alive, after all?"

"Right side up, Cap'n, like a running b'ar, and with as many lives as ary cat! Scalp all tight—bones all hull—and nary scratch!"

"God bless you, Seth!" returned the young Virginian, in a voice tremulous with emotion: "I was never so glad to see you in my life!"

"In course you warn't, Cap'n—for you war gitting in a rayther tight fix about the time we blazed away, and showed them thar brutes that old Wirginy and Kaintuck war about. Jest look now at the greasy niggers stretched out around us here, and tell me they arn't beauties!"

"I would much rather see them as they are, than as I saw them a few minutes ago," rejoined our hero.

"That's a p'inted fact, Cap'n, as any one can swar to what seed you breaking for tall timber. But tell me—ar' this the party that tuk you fust? and ef so, whar's the Cunnel's darter?"

"I have had some rather remarkable adventures since I saw you, Seth," replied Eugene; who forthwith proceeded to give the boatman an account, in as few words as possible, of what had occurred since his capture.

"And so Miss Blanche's a goner, hey?" returned Seth, very soberly. "Tell you what, Cap'n, that thar grates agin my feelings amazing. I'd a gin my right hand for that thar gal's safety; yes, for that matter, this here old ugly carcass, too; and I war in hopes the Injuns 'ud divide off, and that we'd trip up the hounds as had her and you in tow, afore they'd git to thar infernal towns."

"But she can be rescued yet, Seth, can she not?" inquired Eugene, anxiously. "Nay, there is no question about it—she *must* be! she *must* be!"

"Wall, Cap'n, we'll see what can be done; though, ef they've got her on to thar own stamping-ground, whar they're stuck in as thick as musketeers over a swamp-pond, it's got a awful dubious look, it has. But you war saying so'thing about the black nigger, and how he gnawed you loose. That thar war a good trick for the blundering fool—more'n I'd ever 'spected of him. Whar is he now? I seed so'thing black when I fust come up, but didn't exactly know whether it war a nigger or a burnt stump; and it's little I thought as it war Snowball; and it's little I thought, too, that the feller as run war you; for, you see, we'd got up in sight jest as you war striking that thar Injun; and it not being werry light, and you half naked, we couldn't only tell it war a white man afore we pitched in. But whar's Snowball, I say? Hope he warn't killed! I've got a kind of a feller-feeling for that nigger, ef he ar' black; and I'd like to see as many of the old party together agin, as ever can be fotched—for the Lord he knows thar war enough o' us killed."

"I, too, hope that no harm has befallen him!" said Eugene, sufficiently withdrawing his mind from a painful contemplation of the fate of Blanche to make a reply to the boatman.

Seth Harper immediately set up a loud call for Duke; and after several times repeating the name by which he generally addressed him, a rather faint, quavering answer came back, in the voice of the frightened black himself.

"Who-who-who's dat dar?"

"Come out here, you woolly-headed lump of blackness, and don't play possum any more!" cried Seth. Then turning to Eugene, he added: "The nigger's all right and tight, and he'll find his way along when he gits ready; and so come, I want to make you acquainted with the boys here, that you'll find as true a set of humans as ever dipped a oar, trod a trail, or shot a painted Injun."

Saying this, he led Eugene up to the group, and first presented him to a tall, handsomely-formed man, some five-and-thirty years of age, and over six feet in hight, with light complexion, light hair, strongly marked features, and small, fascinating grey eyes—the boatman, in his characteristic manner, observing, as he did so:

"This here, Cap'n Fairfax, I reckon ar' a man you've heerd about; for he's tramped a heap over these diggings—been in all manner of scrimmages—been hung, drownded, and roasted, and biled considerable by the infernal varmints—and can knock down, drag out, and steal more hosses nor any other two-legged thing a running."

"I am quite happy to make his acquaintance!" said Eugene, with a laugh, as he extended his hand to the borderer, and experienced a gripe which gave him pain—the latter at the same time observing:

"The same to you, strannger, and proud to know you. You've had a heap o' dodging round amongst the brutes, I hear, but I hope I see you cl'ar now."

"How did I understand you to call this gentleman?" inquired Eugene, turning to Seth.

"Why, we call him the biggest hoss on the road, or the best nigger o' the pile," laughed Seth. "But he's got two or three other names. When he war dodging the law, on account o' that thar scrape in old Wirginy, he used to call himself Simon Butler; but now, as that's over, he's come out what he allers war, old Simon Kenton."

"Ah! Simon Kenton!" returned Eugene, again shaking the hand of the redoubtable hero: "I'm happy, sir, to say, that your fame has gone much further than yourself! and that your name has long been familiar to me, as one of the bravest of our frontier defenders!"

"I don't know much about fame, strannger," rejoined Kenton, with a light laugh; "but I don't think it's fur out o' the way to say, that I've pitched into a few of the Injuns in my time, and tuk a few o' thar scalps, and stole a few o' thar hosses, for which they don't love me no harder nor a big ba'r can hug. But, strannger, thar's other boys here that needn't be ashamed o' thar doings—and, young or old, they've all been in whar thar war blood drawed."

With this Kenton turned and laid his hand upon the shoulder of a fine-looking youth, almost as tall as himself, with blue eyes, fair complexion, light hair, and what would have been handsome features, but for the prominence of a large Roman nose.

"Here now, for instance," he continued, "you see a mere stripling, who's done some tall fighting for a boy. They say he jumped out o' his cradle and shot a Injun the first week arter he war born, and licked his weight in wild-cats the next. Howsomever that mought be, he's some in Kaintuck, and ar' called Neil Washburn. Next," pursued Kenton, pointing to another, "we've got this here long-legged critter as is called Lew. Wetzel, who can run about as fast as any of the red-skins, load a rifle while running, and shoot at the same time. Then thar's Whiteman, Bowles, Kinney, and Watson, all of the fust order in a scrimmage, and them's all. And now," continued Kenton, in his off-hand way, "as you knows the hull of us beauties, I reckon you'd best gather up your clothes—that is, ef you'll put anything on as an Injun has had on last—and be ready for so'thing else. Go in, boys," he added to the group in general, "and let's git whatever else these niggers has as we want."

Upon this the whole party proceeded to overhaul the bodies of the slain—collecting their rifles, tomahawks, knives, ammunition, and so forth, and restoring Eugene the most of his garments, all of which were more or less stained with the blood of those who had put them on in triumph.

While the party was thus occupied, Duke came timidly stealing from his retreat; and perceiving that Eugene was safe—and also recognizing Seth Harper, who happened to be standing near him, and both fairly within the light of the fire—he advanced more quickly and boldly, at the same time exclaiming:

"Why, Marse Seth, is dat dar you for truth? I's dreffal glad to see you, I is. I's thought I knowed your voice when you hollered, I did—though I's sposed you was dead and gone, long time, and dat dat dar was your ghost or suffin."

"Not yit, Snowball, ef it's all the same to you," returned the boatman, with a laugh. "But I say, boy, how've you managed to keep your wool on, when thar's so many of your brother niggers hev lost their hair? How'd you git out of the creek whar we left you yelping, when your infernal noise fotched all the Injuns on to us?"

"Well, Marse Seth, dat dar was done easy 'nuff. I's just swum like a fish to the shore, and a big Injun come and gin me his hand, and says he, 'How de do, brudder?' I's tole him I was a little bit wet, dat's all, and just a little bit skeered when I t'ought I was drowndering. Den up comes dat odder white Injun, and axed who you was, and whar you're gwine. I tole him I guessed you was white folks dat was trying to run away. Den he said I was a fool, and had me tied up so as I couldn't run. Dar I stayed tied till Marse Eugene and Miss Blanche was fotched back—and Marse Eugene can tell you all de rest, he can."

"But whar war you jest now, when I hollered for you?"

"Well, you see, Marse Seth, dat dar's a cl'ar case, dat is. I's just seed you white gentl'em' come up and 'gin to shoot; and den I knowed de Injuns was such cowards dat dey'd begin to run; so I just stepped down into de woods dar to head 'em off."

"And did you do it?" inquired Seth, with mock seriousness.

"'Spect I's done suffin dat way," returned Duke, with an air of satisfaction. "'Least I's knows dis much—dat dar wasn't no Injuns some past whar dis pusson was."

"And ef thar had, I 'spose you'd a cotched em?" said Seth.

"Yes, Marse Seth, dat's a cl'ar case, dat is—dat's just what I was agwine to done. You see I was agwine to cotch 'em up, and frow 'em down, and broke dar necks, I was."

"You'll do!" said Seth, with a grin; "only, ef you war me, and I war you, I wouldn't put nary grease on that thar wool."

"Why?" asked Duke.

"Kase you're too good to be running round loose; and ef you had your head greased, so'thing mought swaller you."

"Dat's what you tole dis pusson as de Injuns was agwine to do long time ago—but you see as dey didn't."

"That's kase they'd better feed at fust," laughed Seth; "and arter they'd come to know you, they smelt pizen. Thar, Snowball, you'll do—so jest hunt up your traps, and git ready for a tramp."

"By-the-by, Seth," said Eugene, "you have not yet told me how you made your own escape. When you went over the side of the boat, at the fire of the Indians, I believed you were shot."

"Nary scratch," replied the boatman, "but one or two powerful close dodges. I knowed as thar warn't no use in my holding on thar—and we'd both promised Miss Blanche, ef it come to a close thing, we'd try and git away—so I made a big dive, and kept under the water, and swum to the bank, and left the cussed hounds to nose around for me till they got tired. Then I sot off through the woods, and tramped all night; and the next morning I found myself lost, and didn't know which way to steer to git anywhar. Wall, I kept on, and tramped all that day, without anything to eat; but jest at night I fell in with this here party, who war out on a sort of scouting and hoss-stealing ventur'. I told 'em what had hap'd to me, and you, and the rest on us, and larned from them that some of the imps had jest been at thar bloody work over in Kaintuck, and that they'd sot out hot-bent for revenge. So arter talking it over, we agreed to strike up through the country here, towards the Piqua towns, thinking it warn't unlike they'd send you on towards thar village by a small party, and that it mought jest so hap as we'd strike their trail and come in somewhar in time to gin you a lift and send the niggers to thar master below. A few miles back here we struck a broad, fresh trail, and pushed on hard, and come up jest in time to save you."

"For which, Heaven knows, I feel most grateful!" returned Eugene. "How I came to kill that savage, I scarcely know—I believe I was for the moment insane. But tell me—are not the Indians abroad in greater numbers than usual?"

"So it 'pears to me, young man," said Kenton, who came walking up just as the question had been put; "we've heered on 'em in all quarters about these diggings; but they don't seem to be much together 'cept on the Ohio, whar they've attacked nearly every boat as has come down within the last three weeks, and made several captur's. Thar's a good deal of tramping about in small parties, I find; but it seems a little curious, that all I've got track on, or heered on, is afoot. D'ye see any hosses along with the big party as tuk you, Cap'n?"

"No," replied Eugene, "I did not see a single horse. The goods taken from the boat were carried back by the parties themselves—we prisoners doing our share of the labor—and most of them hid in a thicket about fifteen miles from the boat."

"Nary hoss, hey?" said Kenton; "then the brutes must hev left 'em up to their stamping-grounds; and ef we could only git up thar, and find 'em away, we mought make a good haul."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Eugene, starting at the idea; "who knows but what we might do better than that—save Miss Bertrand herself!"

"Oh, yes, the gal!" said Kenton; "I'd a forgot her—though Seth here told me all about it."

"Talk about hosses and hoss-stealing," put in Wetzel, with a laugh, as with some two or three others he now rejoined the party, "and Major Kenton here 'ud forgit himself, as he did a few years ago, at the time he got tuk, and come nigher being roasted than he ever will of getting to Heaven."

"Wall, it's a fact," rejoined Kenton, "that rale good hoss-flesh ar' my leaning; and I never sees a right fine critter, b'longing to white man or nigger, that I don't feel a tremendyus itching to put my carcass onto his, and take a free ride. But I say, young strannger, how about them thar goods? don't you think we can steal 'em back?"

"For myself," answered Eugene, seriously, "I feel like giving no consideration to anything while Miss Bertrand remains in captivity. Human life, and especially such a life as hers, is far more important in my view than either horses or goods!"

"Wall, I 'spect you're right thar, my friend," answered the rough borderer; "and ef anything can be done for the gal, I reckon we oughter gin attention to her fust."

"Do that," rejoined Eugene, "restore her to liberty by any means, and I promise you, you shall not go unrewarded!"

"Bah!" exclaimed Kenton; "who's so mean as to think about pay?"

"What about the paint of them as captur'd her?" inquired the youth already introduced as Neil Washburn; "war they like these here dogs round here?"

"Much the same," answered the young Virginian.

"Then it's like they're Shawnees, and maybe from the old Chillicothe towns on the Miami; and ef so, it's a ventur' as a mighty powerful few 'ud like to make."

After discussing the matter some quarter of an hour, it was finally decided that the parties should set out at daylight on the following morning, and, if possible, take the backward trail of Eugene and the negro to the camp-ground from which they had first escaped, there to be governed in some degree by the discoveries they might make, and the circumstances which might arise. There seemed to be one great drawback to their hopes, however. Two of the assailed party of Indians had escaped; and it was believed these would make their way directly homeward, report their loss to their friends, and, by thus warning them of the proximity of their foes, not only prevent a surprise, or a midnight reconnoitre, but perhaps incite a large body of warriors to set out in quest of the daring invaders. Still, our gallant little band was composed of men who seldom took danger into consideration, or shrunk from attempting any possible adventure, however perilous; and so, notwithstanding they looked upon their present desire, of rescuing a female captive from the hands of one of the most powerful tribes of that day, as the risk of one thrusting his head into the lion's mouth, they yet determined to proceed with their design, recklessly trusting to some opportune fortune or event to carry their purpose safely through.

This being unequivocally settled, they now set off down the bank of the little stream, which they followed for about a mile, and then encamped for the night, in the center of a dense thicket, but without starting a fire, not thinking it prudent, considering the number of the Indians abroad, to render their present location at all conspicuous.

The night passed off without disturbance, and early the next morning they set about the execution of their new-formed design. All trace of Eugene's trail was not yet obliterated; and, aided by his recollection, the whole party was enabled to advance rapidly back to the hill from which he had discovered the camp-fire of the party which had subsequently captured him and been so signally destroyed. From here his trail was not so clear; but owing to the fact that it had been passed over the day previously by the two Indians sent in quest of him, our little band of experienced woodsmen were successful in keeping it, and in reaching the point they sought while the sun was yet an hour or two above the horizon.

Deep and powerful were the emotions excited in the breast of our young hero, as he once more stood upon the ground, and looked upon the very spot, where he had last beheld the being of his heart's adoration. Where was she now? and what physical and mental sufferings had been hers since that eventful time? He shuddered as he thought, and silently vowed, that, come what might, he would go forward to her rescue or his doom.

"The trail's cl'ar, young man, and goes on'ard, as near as we can make it out, towards old Chillicothe," said Kenton, tapping the rather abstracted young Virginian on the shoulder.

"And I will follow it," returned Eugene, quickly, "though it lead me to my grave."

"It's like to lead to so'thing wuss nor the grave fust, ef you foller it with your head up, and with high notions of contempt for the greasy brutes in your path!" rejoined the cautious and practical woodsman. "It's purty cl'ar to be seed, my friend," he continued, "that you're dead in love with the gal we're arter; and I know, from old experience, that that thar arn't the best thing in the world to make a feller cl'ar-headed; and ef a man ever wants a cl'ar head, it's when he's dodging amongst the red-skins, as it's like we'll all be afore long."

"I think," replied Eugene, "you will find me as clear-headed, and as cautious, as if there were not at stake what I value far more than my own existence; but whether so or otherwise, I am now resolved upon going forward, and ascertaining the fate of Blanche Bertrand, even though I go alone."

"Who's agwine to let you go alone?" said Kenton, a little sharply; "not me, nor no other hoss o' this pinfold."

A few words of explanation from Eugene served to restore the good humor of the old woodsman; and after a short general consultation, the perilous journey was resumed, over the trail taken by the renegade and his companions.

Just before sunset our friends came to a point where the small trail they were following was intersected by a much larger one, which thenceforward passed over the same route. This betokened an increase of danger, but did not daunt our gallant little band, who resolved to keep steadily upon their course, till something more definite of good or evil should be known.

As it was now near sunset, however, they concluded to turn aside and encamp for the night. This they did; and a somewhat disagreeable night they passed; for before morning a cold, easterly storm set in, and drenched, and half benumbed them, they not having considered it prudent to start a fire.

But it seldom happens there is an evil without some good in it, and the present evil was not one of the exceptions. If the storm drenched and benumbed them, it drove their foes to close quarters; if it obliterated the trail they were following, it also did their own; and as the country was well known to more than one, and the destination of the Indians considered certain, the scouts regarded the continuance of the storm as so much in their favor, that they would be enabled to approach and reconnoitre the village in comparative safety, which would more than counterbalance any inconvenience they might suffer from the elements.

The storm did continue all the following day, and was unabated when night again shut in the scene, and our heroic little band, from a neighboring elevation, beheld the glimmering of the lights of the great Indian village they were seeking.

And now it was, with feelings peculiar to each—with every heart more quickly beating at the thought—our gallant borderers laid their plans and made their preparations for the fearful hazard of descending singly among their foes, to begin a stealthy search, through the midnight gloom, for the fair being whom it was their hope and aim to rescue from cruel and barbarous hands.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MIDNIGHT SEARCH.

At a late hour of the evening of the eventful night of which we are speaking—the Indian village having become still, the fires extinguished by the rain, and most of the warriors and their families having retired to rest—our little band of scouts stole down from their elevated camp, and cautiously and silently took their way through the woods to the open fields which immediately surrounded the town.

Everything had been planned and arranged for their government throughout the perilous adventure before them, and they were now on their way to execute one of the most hazardous undertakings of their lives. Of all the party, the negro only was left behind, safely lodged in the branches of a large tree, with directions how to proceed under all the different circumstances for which their forethought had been able to provide. Among the others it had been agreed that all should enter the town singly, at different points, and pass carefully from lodge to lodge, looking sharply, and listening keenly, in the hope that, if the prisoner were there, they might by some good fortune, either of sight or sound, discover her locality; that then the party so discovering should stealthily withdraw from the village to that point of the woods where they were now to separate; that whether she were discovered or not, no one should remain absent over a couple of hours; but in case that, by any accident, one of the party should be detected and taken, he should immediately give utterance to his loudest cries, and cause as much disturbance as possible, in order to alarm the village and attract the inhabitants to a single spot, that the others might be the better enabled to escape, and perchance take the girl with them. It was also agreed that, if a pinfold of horses should be discovered by any, that the party so discovering, if time permitted after the first alarm, should set them free, and take as many to the rallying-point as possible, there to remain until the others should come up, or the danger become so imminent as to justify a speedy flight.

Strange, wild and indescribable were the feelings which agitated the breast of our hero, as alone, after parting from his companions, he moved onward through the deep, almost rayless darkness, toward the stronghold of his foes, in quest of one whose life was far dearer to him than his own. It was a terrible venture, and he so felt it! What chance had he of success? How could he hope to discover her, even if she were an inmate of the village, by passing through it in the dead hours of night, when all might be silently asleep? If he really knew she were here—knew her locality, and had his friends prepared to act in concert—it might be a different matter; there might indeed be some little foundation upon which to raise a slight hope; but now, even if found, what chance would he have, not only of taking her from her guards, but from the very center, as it were, of a hundred, perhaps a thousand, of her barbarous enemies?

"I cannot save her," he mentally said; "no virtue in me, of myself, can find her on such a night as this, in such a place, even if living, and safely take her hence; but Providence, acting through me—using me as a mere instrument—may snatch her from a horrible captivity, and restore her to her friends; and so, praying God to aid me, I will go forward to her salvation, or my own destruction."

Eugene entered the town from the south; but the night being very dark, with the rain still falling, he was obliged to grope his way forward more slowly and cautiously than was consonant with his impatient desire of reaching what he considered the crisis of his fate. The first lodge he came to was dark within and silent—and so was the next, and the next—but a low, savage growl, as he neared the fourth, warned him to turn aside and take a different direction, if he would escape the alarming howl and sharp fangs of a canine foe.

As one lodge after another was reached and passed, without the faintest trace of her he sought, a feeling of despair began to take possession of his breast. What if, after all, she could not be found, even if here? and what if she had been taken to another village? He was here, in the very heart of an Indian town, risking his life to find her; and how terrible was the thought that he might be captured at any moment, and subsequently be condemned and tortured, and she know nothing of his fate? To die for her—to save her by his death—to show her, by such devotion, how deep and pure was the love he dared not speak in her presence—he felt would be no great sacrifice; but to be taken and tortured, without bringing redemption to her, and without her knowledge, was a thought too horrible even for contemplation.

For nearly half an hour Eugene continued to grope his way among the huts of the Indian village, without hearing other sounds than the pattering of the rain and the occasional growl or bark of a mastiff, and without meeting with any startling adventure, or coming in contact with any of his friends, or getting the faintest clue to her he sought.

By this time, to the best of his judgment, he had penetrated nearly to the center of the town; and now, for the first time since entering the place, he caught the faint glimmer of a light through the crevice of a lodge some eight or ten yards distant. The sight gave him hope, though he could scarcely tell why; and approaching it as quickly as prudence would justify, he looked through the small aperture made by the wind moving slightly back a thick buffalo robe which hung at the door, and which was fastened down within to keep out the driving storm.

And as he looked, he felt his whole frame shake and quiver with a painful excitement—for there, within less than ten feet of him, her face buried in her hands, her hair disheveled, her garments torn and disarranged, sat the beautiful captive, Blanche Bertrand! She was seated upon what appeared to be a long, low couch, of rude construction, over which was spread a buffalo robe, and with several handsomely-dressed deerskins lying carelessly about, to be used for covering or not, as she might see proper. On the opposite side of the wigwam was another couch, of similar construction, and upon this sat two slightly-robed Indian females, one old and the other young; and both, with their eyes fixed upon the fair prisoner, in the attitude of persons who had suddenly started up from sleep. Between the two was a sort of rude slab-table, with an iron lamp in the center, from which issued the rays of light that had caught the attention of, and guided our hero to, his present position, and now disclosed to him all he beheld. The hut itself was a rude structure of poles, bark, skins and earth; and with the exception of a few cooking utensils, contained little in the way of furniture besides what we have mentioned. There had been some attempt at ornament, however, in the way of illuminated skins and shields, which hung around the walls—together with the antlers of a stag—a painted bow and sheaf of arrows—a silver-mounted calumet, probably of English workmanship—a few strips of wampum, and some minor articles which it is needless to mention.

But the glance of the excited Eugene scarcely took in the surroundings, and rested only upon poor Blanche and her female guard; and it required all the will of which he was master, to restrain the impulse which would have carried him forward to his own destruction, if not to that of her he had come to save.

"She is found, but how can she be rescued?" was the first seemingly unanswerable thought which flashed across his brain.

There appeared to be but one plan which might give hope of success; and that was to wait till the whole party should fall asleep, and then steal in, rouse Blanche, and get her to withdraw, silently and unperceived. But even this would be attended with the most fearful of perils; and a hundred trifling things—trifling if considered by themselves, but terribly important in their relation to the issue—might occur to thwart his design, if not to bring swift destruction upon both him and her. The guard might not again fall asleep—or, falling asleep, might be awakened by the slightest sound—and one single shriek of alarm might bring overwhelming numbers upon the daring adventurer, and crush out the last hope of poor Blanche in his own capture or death.

But only a few seconds were given Eugene for contemplation, ere his whole attention was arrested by the voice of the elder squaw, who said, in a harsh, guttural, angry tone:

"What for you wake? what for you get up so? why you no sleep?"

On hearing these words, Blanche withdrew her hands, raised her pale face proudly and haughtily, fixed her deep blue eyes, now gleaming with the fire of an unconquerable spirit, sternly upon the other, and replied, firmly but calmly:

'I sleep at no one's bidding! and so long as my limbs remain unbound, I shall rise whenever it suits my pleasure!"

"Me have white squaw bound, if no lie down and go sleep!" returned the crone. "White chief no come to squaw, me call odder brave."

'Do as you please!" rejoined Blanche; "and, so far as I have the power, so will I! You may think, because I am here alone, in the hands of so many fiends, you can subdue me—bend me to your vile will and purpose; but I warn you that mine is a spirit which will break ere it bend; and were I not restrained by the hope of being delivered by force of arms from your accursed tribe, I would soon be free from your taunts and insults?"

"How white squaw get away?" queried the other, in a sneering tone.

"That is my secret, and you are not my confidant!" said Blanche, throwing herself back on her couch, and turning her face to the opposite wall.

"By'm-by me has you tie and whip!" muttered the crone, as with her companion she also lay down, but kept her black, snake-like eyes fixed upon the light, fragile form of the still undaunted prisoner.

As Eugene listened to these words, his left hand clutched the barrel of his rifle with the gripe of a vice, and the fingers of his other worked almost convulsively with the haft of the knife which had already drank the heart's blood of one of his foes.

As Eugene still remained looking through the slight aperture into the lodge, which contained a prize more priceless to him than aught else in the world, he fancied he heard quick steps approaching; and thinking they might possibly be those of a friend, but fearing they might be those of an enemy, he drew stealthily back a few feet from the door, and close up against the side of the hut.

Scarcely had he done so, when he felt he had reason to congratulate himself upon the acuteness of his hearing; for the steps advanced straight to the door, and he could see the shadow of an arm and human figure, as the former was thrust forward in the act of pulling aside the skin that closed the entrance. It gave way but little, however, at the first effort; and the voice of the new-comer was immediately heard uttering a few impatient words in the Indian tongue. To these there came a quick reply, apparently from the younger of the squaws; and was almost instantly followed by a noise inside, as if the fastenings were being removed which held the buffalo robe to its place. The next moment the skin flapped in the wind, was thrust hurriedly aside, and the dark, shadowy figure disappeared from the sight of Eugene; who, gliding stealthily back to his former position, soon recognized by sight, as he already fancied he had by sound, the person of his most bitter and dreaded foe, Ralph Hawley the renegade.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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THERE is an heroic innocence as well as an heroic courage.

GUY PERCY'S WOOING.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

The years have flung their blights and blooms
  Across Guy Percy's lonely way—
'Tis night—De Beaufort's ducal rooms
  With fragrance, lights, and flowers are gay.
The same time-mellowed pictures shine
  On the old walls, of feast, and fight—
The same enchanted sea of wine
  Fills the rich cups with blushing light;
And music's most delicious flow
  And ebb, breaks on the shores of rhyme,
And mingles with the starry glow
  Beneath that palace roof sublime.
With gem-bright hair, and flashing eyes,
  Proud forms glide on, from room to room—
The fragrant air is faint with sighs
  From parted lips of crimson bloom.
Where heavy purple shadows keep,
  Fair Duchess Norma sits apart—
"Stoop, memory, out of summer's deep,
  And write my name upon his heart!"—
She lifts a locket from her breast,
  The pale cheek flushes red as wine,
She sees—beneath the Beaufort crest—
  Guy Percy's lineaments divine!
Ah, proud, sad woman, hiding well
  The fiery trace of inward tears,
That scornful lip of thine could tell
  Of the lost glory of thy years!
For Duchess Norma—Beaufort's queen—
  Amid the throngs of gay and fair,
Thou seek'st *in vain his* stately mien—
  His mild blue eyes and sunbright hair—
The purple robes, the flashing gems,
  Have lost their feverish charm for her—
Her forehead's regal diadems
  Burn like the crown of Lucifer!—* * * * *
Far from the palace-glitter, far,
  Guy Percy seeks a truer hand—
His fame has risen like a star
  And dawned on many a distant land.
From the dark memory of the past—
  The withered flowers, the wasted wine,
His lonely heart hath turned at last—
  To worship at a purer shrine—* * * *—
That girlish face is very bright!
  A shower of tresses, twilight dim,
Half vails her brown eyes' starry light,
  And fair cheek flushed for love of *him*.
She reads, by the soft sunset glow,
  The story of her poet's love—
Red tides of blushes ebb and flow,
  And trembling like a netted dove,
Her life's glad pulses, rapture-stirred,
  Against her dainty bodice beat—
The mingled songs of wind and bird
  Were never half so wildly sweet!
You plead, fair ladye, for a lay—
  The rainbow gilds not *every* morn—
No rose-tree blossoms every day—
  And truest poems are rarest born—
And from my spring-time's wasted soil
  No flower of song may wake to birth,
Found worthy of the poet's toil,
  Or thy pure spirit's gentle worth!
And yet, whate'er of love or truth
  Still lingers in this breast of mine,
With the *best* memories of my youth
  I offer at thy holy shrine.
Thou knowest the legend of my days—
  I loved a lady, false as fair—
The darkness struck our separate ways,
  And hid me in a long despair
But now the lilies at thy gate,
  The roses on thy cottage walls,
Are dearer than the purple state
  Of Norma's ducal-palace halls.
She sighs amid her lovers now,
  Behind her splendid prison bars—
The simple ringlets on thy brow
  Are better than her crown of stars!
And, love, in lieu of flattering lay
  I give thee truth's sweet ballad, sung
In honor of thy girlhood's May,
  And heart and brain forever young—
The chaplet of my wealth and fame—
  The honors of my princely line—
And a fond bosom's passionate flame
  I offer—Bertha—wilt be mine?

NOT IN WRATH.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Frank."

"Sir." The boy started at the sound of his father's voice, while his color hightened.

Mr. Lloyd had left the house, with his axe on his shoulder, a few minutes before, on his way to a clearing not far off, where his men were at work; but a thought crossing his mind had induced him to return. He spoke with some sternness of voice and manner.

"Sir," repeated the boy, looking with a half timid glance at his father.

"Don't go to the mill-dam to-day," said Mr. Lloyd, speaking slowly, and with authority.

Frank did not answer promptly. So his father said, in a tone of sharp interrogation, "Do you hear, sir?"

"Yes, sir," replied Frank.

"Very well; then see to it that I am obeyed." And Mr. Lloyd started off again for the clearing. He did not feel altogether satisfied with himself, for he was conscious of not having addressed his son in the right spirit. It would have been as easy to have spoken more mildly, to have made the interdiction in a different tone of voice, and yet been quite as likely to insure obedience.

"I wish I could control *myself* a little better," said the farmer, as he strode away. "I don't think this harsh, peremptory mode of speaking ever does much good. I'm sure it never helped to make me any more obedient, when I was a boy; but rather tended to excite rebellion. The most outrageous thing I ever did, when a boy, was in defiance of angrily announced authority. Frank is sensative, and my manner hurt him. I must guard myself better."

"What's the matter, Frank?" inquired the boy's mother, coming to the door. She had heard her husband's voice pitched in rather a harsh key, and it drew her away from her work.

"Nothing," was answered, "only father always speaks to me as if he would take my head off."

"What did he say?"

"He told me not to go to the mill-dam."

"Why did he say that?" inquired Mrs. Lloyd.

"I don't know."

"He had some good reason, no doubt; and you must be sure not to disobey him."

It was, perhaps, two hours later in the day, when a lad named Jacob Green met Frank on the road, a little way from his father's house. He had a fishing rod in his hand.

"Where are you going?" asked Frank.

"To the mill-dam. Won't you go along?"

"Not to-day," was answered.

Jacob strongly urged a compliance with his wishes, but Frank resisted all temptation.

"I met Jacob Green just now," said Frank, speaking to his mother a little while afterwards.

"Did you?" Mrs. Lloyd replied, in an absent way.

"Yes; and he's going to the mill-dam all alone. He's most too small a boy to be trusted there by himself—and he's very venturesome. If father hadn't said what he did, I would go there, just to see that Jacob didn't come to any harm."

"You musn't disobey your father, it will make him very angry," said Mrs. Lloyd.

"Maybe," suggested the boy, "if I were to go to the top of the hill, just above the dam, and sit and watch Jacob, he wouldn't mind. That wouldn't be going to the mill-dam, you know. And if you told him just how it was, and said that you had thought it better for me to go there on Jacob's account, I am sure he would say that I had done just right, instead of wrong."

Mrs. Lloyd thought for a little while, and then replied:

"Jacob is a small boy, and there are dangerous places about the mill-dam. I wonder how his mother can let him go there alone? Oh, if he should fall in, to be swept down under the gate, or over the dam, nothing could save him. I think you had better go, Frank, and I'll make it all right with your father. Only, be sure not to go down to the water, unless something happens to Jacob."

Thus permitted and enjoined, Frank started off for the mill-dam, which was about a quarter of a mile distant, in a lonely valley, surrounded by woods and hills. He walked along rapidly, for the idea that Jacob Green might fall into the water at any moment having taken possession of his mind, he felt anxious to reach the neighborhood of the dam as quickly as possible. On gaining the wooded hill that rose steeply above the point where the water, swollen by late rains, leaped, roaring, over the dam, Frank searched with his eyes, hurriedly, along the shore, up and down, for Jacob Green. But the lad was no where in sight. He would have shouted his name, but a secret sense of disobedience, and fear of discovery by his hasty-tempered father, who might hear his voice, kept him silent. Descending as near to the edge of the dam as he deemed it prudent, under the circumstances, to go, he examined every point in the range of vision with the most careful scrutiny.

A sudden fear now seized upon the boy's heart. Jacob must have fallen into the water and been swept over the dam! His heart beat like a hammer in his breast; respiration became difficult; he felt a choking sensation in his throat. For some moments he stood bewildered. But anxiety for the little boy's safety became superior to all other emotions.

"He may have fallen in near the head-gate," he now said to himself. And then, as the image of Jacob, clinging to some frail support, amid the whirling, sucking eddies, presented itself to his mind, Frank sprung to the spot where the water from the dam flowed into the mill race. Holding on to a piece of wood, he leaned over the brink of a high stone wall, or pier, and, as he looked down into the water that seethed and struggled above the half-opened gate, he held his breath in momentary suspense. But no sign of the lad was visible. Frank drew himself up, taking a deep inspiration, and stood for some moments bewildered and at fault. Then he stepped lighty over a narrow plank that had been thrown across the sluice into which the head-gate opened, and standing on one of the abutments of the dam, leaned his body over and looked down, a distance of some twenty feet, into the mad whirlpool of waters that lay beneath. His head swam; and he lifted himself up and moved back, with a feeling of terror in his heart. If he were to fall headlong there, no power on earth could save him!

A little while Frank stood on the abutment that jarred to the heavy fall of water. Then he stepped carefully across the narrow bridge that separated him from the land, and took a long breath as he felt himself in a position of safety. Slowly and anxiously were his eyes now thrown around him, and every point within their range searched with the most careful scrutiny. But the search was entirely fruitless. Ascending the hill that rose above the dam, Frank now ran along its brow, for some distance, up the stream, letting his gaze fall upon every part of the shore. Suddenly he stopped, with an exclamation of relief, for Jacob had come into full view, sitting upon a rock that projected far into the dam, holding his fishing rod over the water, and watching the scarlet-topped cork that lay motionless in quiet [illegible].

Frank did not call to the boy, nor, by any sign, make known his proximity. He had come, in disobedience to his father, to watch over and protect him from harm; and the fear of hasty misjudgment on the part of his father, when the fact of disobedience became known, sobered his feelings, and made him prefer solitude to companionship. So he sat down, concealing himself among the trunks of three or four large trees; yet keeping his head in a position to see Jacob through a small opening between them. Nearly half an hour passed, when Jacob, tired of watching his immoveable cork, drew up his line, and moved down the bank to a position nearer the point where the swollen water went rushing over the dam. As he threw his line again, Frank arose and walked along the hill above him, until he came nearly opposite the thundering waterfall, and then sat down again to watch the lonely boy—himself more lonely.

The clearing at which Mr. Lloyd was at work with his men lay about a quarter of a mile from the mill-dam. The father had just leveled an immense sycamore, and stood gazing at the white trunk, with its giant limbs, when a neighbor, emerging from the wood behind him, came up and said:

"Good day, Mr. Lloyd!"

"Ah! Good day to you, Maxwell!" responded the farmer, in a hearty tone.

"Splendid land this," said the other, "but heavily timbered."

"A year or two will show its quality," Lloyd remarked.

"Heavy freshet," said Maxwell.

"Yes; you can hear the dam roaring even here, when the wind sets this way."

"Dangerous place for boys, I should think," said Maxwell, in a tone that made the farmer look at him with a sobered aspect. "I saw your boy there as I came along——"

"What!" The axe dropped from Mr. Lloyd's hand, while a dark shadow fell over his countenance.

"I saw your boy there, skipping about the head gate with as little concern as if he had been on a level floor."

"Oh! Isn't that too much! And I positively forbade him going near the dam!" Mr. Lloyd's excitement was sudden and intense.

"If it was my boy, I'd take the hide off of him," said Maxwell.

"He'll be sorry for this to the latest day of his life!" And with these threatening words on his lips, Mr. Lloyd turned away, and disappeared in the woods. Only once he paused, and that was to cut a thick, strong, lithe birch rod—then he strode forward with long reaching steps in the direction of the mill-dam.

Near the place where Jacob had dropped his line, the decayed trunk of a fallen tree was projected several feet into the water. Soon growing impatient from want of success in his sport, the boy, in something of a spirit of desperation, walked out to the end of this trunk, and threw his line as far up the stream as he could fling it. Then he watched the cork as it floated rapidly down with the current, hoping that some fish would seize the bait and drag it under. But no denizen of the turbid stream saw the tempting morsel, or, seeing, was lured to take the treacherous food. Excited, now, by the real danger of the little boy, Frank started up, and was about calling to him to come back upon the shore, when the sharp crack of a fallen limb, broken by a heavy tread, caused him to turn suddenly, and there stood his father, with a face made dark by cruel anger, one hand outstretched to seize him, and the other uplifted and grasping a heavy rod.

"Oh, father, don't!" exclaimed the frightened boy. "Don't! Ask mother!"

"Didn't *I* tell you *not* to come here?" was the stern response, and the father's grip tightened on the rod, as he seized the boy's arm. The hand was already descending, freighted with a fearful blow, when a wild cry of terror swept up from the waters, and arrested the arm midway in its course. The eyes of father and son both turned to the direction from which the cry came. Jacob had fallen into the dam, and was already gliding away in the rapid current. Making a sudden spring, Frank freed himself from the grasp of his father, and then went leaping down the hill with wind-like speed. It was some moments before Mr. Lloyd recovered sufficient presence of mind to follow. But ere he was half way to the water, Frank had reached a point below the floating boy, and was creeping out upon the slender trunk of a sapling that bent low over the water, in the hope of grasping him as he was borne onward by the strong current. But the brave lad saw at a glance, on gaining the utmost point of the tree, that Jacob would float a few feet beyond his arm. So, with singular decision and presence of mind, he dropped into the water, grasping a slender, extreme branch of the tree, and throwing his freed hand still farther out into the stream. But, alas! the rush of water against his body commenced bearing both him and the tree top downwards and inwards towards the shore. Conscious of this, at a moment when Jacob was only a few feet above him, Frank let go of the tree top, and pushed himself out with a stroke of his feet, far enough to be able to grasp the drowning boy. As he did so, both went gliding on towards the dam, only a hundred feet below, equally powerless in the strong current.

For some moments Mr. Lloyd stood paralyzed upon the shore. The struggling boys were beyond his reach, and wholly beyond his skill to save. Then he commenced running along the bank, his mind in an agony of terrible suspense, keeping opposite to them as they went quickly down the swollen flood. In less than two minutes they were within a few feet of the dam, yet still, if the eyes of Mr. Lloyd did not deceive him, in a line with the abutment, and a faint hope dawned within his mind that they might strike against the pier, and glide inwards towards the head-gates, instead of outwards in the current, and over the deadly waterfall.

Mr. Lloyd stood still in fearful suspense, his lips apart, his arms reaching out impotently, and his face as pale as ashes. Suddenly he struck his hands together, and sprang forward with an eager bound. The drowning boys had swept against the pier, and passed under instantly from sight. Throwing off his coat as he ran, and drawing off his boots as he reached the head gate, Mr. Lloyd leaped into the water, and disappeared a few feet inside of the spot where he had seen them go down. In a moment or two he came to the surface, grasping tightly the two boys, now insensible, struck out with one hand vigorously for the shore, and succeeded, though not without difficulty, in reaching a spot just above the heavy stone wall, where he could clamber up the bank. In striking the abutment, the pressure of the current against the lads had borne them inwards into the quiet eddy above the head-gate, instead of outward into the leaping cataract.

The first care of Mr. Lloyd was to restore, if possible, animation to the apparently dead bodies of the two boys. Frank earliest showed signs of [illegible] there was a feeble play of the pulse, and a slight flushing of the cheeks in Jacob, but to neither did life come back, at the time, in full vigor. A neighbor, who happened to come by, assisted Mr. Lloyd to carry the boys home, where, under the attendance of a physician, full activity was soon restored to the vital organs.

"I positively forbade his going to the mill-dam," said Mr. Lloyd to his wife, after all fear was past, something of his old sternness and anger showing itself in tone and countenance.

"He did not disobey you in spirit," replied the mother, with moist eyes, and voice that had not yet regained an even tone.

"How can you make that appear?" was demanded.

And then the mother of Frank related how, with her permission, he had gone to the mill-dam to watch over and guard the little boy who was there all alone. And she related, also, for she had gleaned from her recovered son the incident already known to the reader, how he had passed nearly an hour upon the hill above the water, after having searched about the head-gates, watching lest harm came to the lonely and thoughtless Jacob Green. The heroism of his son Mr. Lloyd knew already.

For a long time the stern farmer sat with his head bowed upon his breast. A shudder, almost of horror, shook, for a moment, his strong frame, as vivid imagination drew a picture of himself standing in wrath above this heroic son, with his arm already descending to strike a cruel blow. He had not spoken to Frank since life had flowed back freely through his veins. When fully satisfied that all danger was past, he had retired from the chamber where he lay, displeasure at the act of disobedience resuming the uppermost place in his mind.

Now his feelings towards the boy were altogether changed. Tender love had driven out wrath.

"Where is father?" Several times had Frank asked this question, looking as he spoke with a troubled countenance, towards the door of the chamber in which he lay. He remembered, now, only the stern displeasure of his stern parent—his own heroism and self-devotion were forgotten.

"Is father angry still?" Frank lifted his eyes, that were tearful and sad, to his mother's face.

"No, my son. Your father is not angry now," answered the mother.

"Where is he?"

"In the next room."

Frank sighed, as his lashes drooped until they lay upon his cheek. A tear was crushed by each fringing lid. Noiselessly his mother rose and left the room.

"Frank, my son!" The voice that said this was low and unsteady, but full of tenderness.

Instantly the boy's eyes flew open.

"Oh, father!" And his arms, leaping upwards, caught eagerly the neck of his father, and dragged him down until the hard, rough cheek lay against his own softer and warmer face.

"I wasn't disobedient in heart, father," sobbed the excited boy. "Ask mother. She will tell you all about it."

"I know all, my son," replied Mr. Lloyd, as soon as he could steady his voice. "I know all. You have been brave, noble, manly, and I am proud of you."

Oh, with what delicious sweetness did these words of praise fall upon the boy's ears. From other lips they would have been pleasant; but coming from that cold parent, always more ready to blame than to praise, they were as honey to his soul. And the father, in after time, could no more forget the expression of his son's face, as he uttered these words, than he could forget the impression of that same face, as he stood over him in wrath, only an hour or two before, with hand uplifted to strike. How many hundreds of times afterwards did this last image of himself haunt his quiet moments. He would have given all that he possessed of worldly things, if that one act of his life could have been obliterated, if the page of memory on which was recorded, side by side, that other and better incident, could have shown only the golden record of love.

NEIGHBOR HESTLER.

BY AUGUSTA HERBERT.

Neighbor Hestler loved to drop into our great, comfortable, sunshiny kitchen, and enjoy a social chat with us women folks. If my husband was about, so much the better—he talked with him, too. With chair tipped back against the wall, and his portly form placed very much at its ease, our placid-faced neighbor could discourse for the hour together of the topics of the day and of the age. There was never any confusion in our kitchen. Wilson (my dear husband) and I had but two children, and as both they and we were stout, healthy, and good-natured, there was no trouble with them. They required but little attention and little discipline, amusing themselves, for the most part, in the garden, the woods, or the fields.

My sister Nance lived with me; and between us we managed all the work of our family with the utmost ease, and even with considerable *pleasure*, to ourselves. We had nothing to try or fret us, consequently we were able always to wear smiling and cheerful faces. Neighbor Hestler was a retired gentleman—too rich, or too lazy, to have anything to do. His visits to our kitchen were as much to kill time as for any other purpose.

He had often praised my sister and me for our uniform good temper. We accepted his compliments with good grace, and were quite disposed to allow him to make himself as much at home with us as he desired. But by-and-by we began to wonder why his *wife* never ran in to sit an hour with us. We would have received her most cordially.

"Why don't Mrs. Hestler come over to see us?" asked Nance of the round and ruddy gentleman.

"She would be glad to come; but she thinks she can't get time," was the reply.

"She ought to have time to go out some. She keeps two girls, don't she?"

"Why, no—not now. We thought we could hardly afford the expense any longer. The baby is weaned now, and the oldest girl takes a good deal of the care of it off of her mother. She *might* go out more than she does, that's a fact; but the truth is, ladies, Mrs. Hestler is too anxious, and, I am sorry to say, she has grown very fretful of late years. I don't see why she should. I'm sure *I'm* not fretful, and *she* didn't use to be. There wasn't a more angelic disposition on the earth than Mrs. Hestler's was when I married her."

The fleshy breast of our amiable visitor rose with a gentle sigh.

"How many children has your wife?" asked Nance, with a singular expression about her saucy mouth and eyes.

"Eight, miss. She—that is, *we*, have eight children."

"And I believe Mrs. Hestler is but forty years of age."

"Oh, no! bless you, I'm but forty-five myself; and my wife is ten years younger—she was quite a child when we were married, [illegible] quite a child—dear little thing! how delicate and pretty she was—she's delicate enough now—but women *do* fade astonishingly fast. Don't you think so, Mrs. Wilson? though, to be sure, *you* have not faded—not at all—that is, I should say not—I should *say* that you are as fresh and blooming now as you was the day on which you was married."

"I was not blooming *at all* when I was married. Mr. Wilson took a poor, feeble, pallid girl—thin as a shadow, and very much discouraged about ever being well—when *he* married; but a more careful, skillful, tender nurse no woman ever had. He took care of me as if I had been a baby. He never allowed me to weary myself, or to have one anxiety or care which any self-denial or exertion of his could remove; and in less than two years I hardly knew myself. I'm sure my friends did not know me. My husband's kind care was rewarded by my becoming the hardy, happy creature which I still am. I'm sorry your experience has been the reverse of this—that *your care of your wife* has not been so well rewarded."

"Hem—yes—you see, Mrs. Hestler didn't *need* so much care. The fact is, she was well enough when she was married, but she has had complaints enough since, that is certain. It is unfortunate for a man to have a weakly wife."

"How are your children?"

"Some of them have always been ailing—and I must say that they are so cross and fractious that I am glad to be out of the house. They don't sleep well nights either—some one always having the legs ache, or the head ache, or the stomach ache, or they are singing out for water, or for something else. It must be a perfect bedlam in the nursery, but I generally contrive to sleep it out. I'm blest with a contented mind, and can sleep soundly. Wish it was the same with Mrs. Hestler—but she is jigging out of bed and in the whole night long—at least, she says so when I tell her I wish that she would try to look bright and fresh at the breakfast table, just as she used to when we were first married. She always excuses herself by saying that she hardly slept a wink all night. I never know much about what she and the children do."

"Perhaps if you *should* know more about their performances it might be better for Mrs. Hestler's temper," suggested Nance.

"Oh, bless you, my dear! what can a man do with children? And then, mine are *such* young ones. They all take after their mother. I never stay in the house a minute longer than I can help. If things there were only as they are here, a man could take some comfort of his home. As it is, I take my paper and go down by the brook to read it. Couldn't understand a word I read were I to remain in the house. I couldn't endure to have my mind so disturbed. Upon my word, I do wish Mrs. Hestler had my quiet and happy disposition."

Here Nance, with her face as red as fire, ran out of the room.

In less than ten minutes she was back, and at her heels came four young Hestlers, while in her arms she carried the baby.

"Here, Mr. Hestler," she said, dumping baby upon its father's lap. "We shall be very happy to have you visit us forenoons, if you will bring these children with you, in order to give your wife a chance to attend to her household affairs in time to be able to sit down in peace, or run out and see her neighbors in the afternoon. I found her with the baby in her arms, and these others hanging about her, teasing her until she knew not which way to look or what to do. She was as pale as a cloth; her hair was all pulled over her face, and her whole appearance was more like that of a distracted woman than that of a loved and cherished wife. I took the baby, and told the children that they must all come and see father, and they should bear him tell them a story. Now, sir, I must say to you that were you only to go about and keep your eight children's shoes tied for one week, you would find that you had *something to do*. I must further say that the man who throws upon a delicate and nervous mother the whole care of eight children (certainly *four* more than she ought ever to have had), and then complains of her fretfulness and dulness, and of the want of order and comfort in his home, is either a hard-hearted monster, who ought not to be suffered to live, or a selfishly thoughtless one, who ought to be *taught better*. You, I am sure, have too kind a heart to wish to have your wife killed by too much labor and care, but she *will* die, or become in a manner insane, if things go on at this rate. If you want to save her life, to restore her good temper, to show yourself worthy of a woman's love, lay your shoulder to this wheel—the hardest, if I mistake not, that ever that stout, round shoulder yet undertook to move—and help that discouraged woman out of the slough of despond into which you have been *the sole means* of thrusting her. If you don't do this, her life will be required at your hands, for you will be her murderer!"

During this excited speech I had been standing with my hands in the bread pan, and my eyes fixed upon the face of neighbor Hestler.

Astonishment, anger, shame and sorrow, all took their turns to show themselves in the heretofore so placid features. His face flushed and paled, and flushed and paled again, as my sister hurried on; he reached toward his hat, then withdrew his hand, glanced at the young brood round him, and reached for his hat again. Baby, meantime, had amused himself by wiping his nose and his dirty hands on "dada's" velvet vest, after which he began patting the paternal cheek, and cooing and going very good-naturedly up into that troubled face.

After some further discussion of the matter, neighbor Hestler admitted that he had been rather thoughtless, and a not very efficient lightener of his wife's cares, and he agreed to try and do better in future. He turned his attention to the "olive branches" now standing about him, and delighted them by telling them a nice long story. To be sure it was told and heard under somewhat difficult circumstances, for master Horace, the fat and heavy, but most active and resolute, baby, persisted in interjecting numberless exclamation points, and in making whatever interpolations he thought agreeable to himself. He also occupied himself by plunging about from one side of his father to the other, and in making desperate attempts to *ascend* him, in order, probably, to discover how things would appear, viewed from the crown of the ancestral head. The necessary exertions to save Horace from breaking his own neck, or tearing his father's eyes out, very essentially distracted the poor man's mind, and his story, though deserving of commendation because of its length, had some rather amusingly incongruous points. Nance, more than once, came near dropping a pie, or a loaf of bread (for it was our baking day), in consequence of the violent, though repressed, laughing fits into which she was thrown by the wild remarks of her victim.

The story had not been three minutes finished when a wild outcry arose from among the four children. One little fellow had knocked another down, and a third was soundly fisting him. The little girl, catching up a small chair, essayed to impound her brothers between its legs. All of *them were yelling with their whole strength.*

Consternation, mortification, despair, were painted on poor Hestler's face.

With one kick he separated the belligerents, and they lay sprawling in all directions, crying bitterly.

"*That* isn't the way to show your patience," said Nance, running to the aid of the prostrate children.

Sugar and gingerbread soon appeased them, and then neighbor Hestler rose to go.

"Oh! don't go home until you get Horace to sleep," cried Nance, catching up his hat. "Just think what a peaceful time your wife must be having, and how thankful she will be to have baby asleep when he goes home. You are beginning to see what life must be to her, and I am sure that you mean now to try and render it more endurable. What you have been unable to endure for two hours without becoming so furious as to kick your children half way across the room, you have been expecting your weaker half to bear for years without growing unamiable or discouraged. Say, sir, you *won't* go home till that child is asleep, will you?"

"No," said our visitor; but his look and his tone were doleful in the extreme. "It *must* be dreadful to be all the time tied to small children," he confessed.

At last, however, the deed was done—the victory, the *hard-earned* victory, won, and our poor, tired-out neighbor Hestler was permitted to go home. The children Nance detained for an hour longer, and then sent them off in high glee, with each a fresh slice of gingerbread in hand.

We did not see Mr. H. again for several days; but soon after that eventful morning Mrs. Hestler made us a visit. She was in a very cheerful mood, for her, and we imagined that she really looked better in health than we had ever before seen her.

"What *did* you, ladies, do to my husband, that day that he had the children over here so long? He has seemed quite another man since then. I had not supposed it possible for him to be so much help and comfort to me. A new spirit has come upon him, and I am certain that it is through your good influence."

Many, many days from this time, when once more neighbor Hestler spent his idle hours in our pleasant kitchen—his children were then all too large to need constant watching and care—he told Nance, in a confidential way, that he owed her a great debt of gratitude; that it was by means of the lesson she taught him that he had long enjoyed the pleasures of a happy home, and of the society of a wife who had for many years, ever since the morning of that lesson, ceased to be a sad-faced heavy-hearted fretter.

There are many Hestlers in the world, kind-hearted, but thoughtless men, who are, in effect, perfectly selfish and cruel for want of reflection. Their wives are dying of over-much care, of unshared duties, and instead of allowing the poor household slave to find help and comfort in them, these husbands only reprove their wives for so much fretting. Lusty in strength themselves, why do they not take more pity upon the weak and faded, aye, and dying creatures that they still profess to love

WEEP for love, but not for anger; a cold rain will never bring flowers.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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PERSONAL AUTHORITY.

"Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change, his place."

It is difficult for us to determine the extent of personal authority in ancient times; but from all that we can learn in the records of antiquity, it is very evident that it existed then in greater vigor than now. That is, the authority of individuals was greater in the ancient times; the authority of kings, of magistrates, of parents, of sages or philosophers, of saints, and of venerable men. Even in remote sections, in small villages, and rural districts, where primitive manners are still preserved, and to which the personal independence of modern intellectualism has not reached, we may sometimes perceive a few traces of patriarchal times in the reverence exhibited for virtuous men, and the something-like superstitious confidence of security in following their footsteps or attending their presence. Heaven is believed to watch over them particularly. It is safer to be with them than with ordinary individuals in the hour of danger. If it thunder fiercely, or if the wind rage and tear up trees, and blow off the roofs of the humble cottages, the neighbors will run instinctively into the house of the venerable sage—death itself seeming less fearful should he be doomed with them to suffer. Such feelings of respect are natural to man; but it is in rural life where the development is most perfect. There the personal virtues are better known, because more easily discovered; the homes of the farmers are more accessible than the homes of townsmen. It is easier ascertained whether they are good fathers, good husbands, good neighbors, good men. *A man's individuality is lost in a city*, and he can only be known to his townsmen as an orator, a magistrate, or some other official, who may, by the exercise of mere intellectual abilities, assume all the attributes of virtue in public, and cast them off at the threshold of his own home. Hence, talent in towns has taken the place of more general worth in the exercise of authority, and not being sanctified by virtue, and rivaled withal by an immense multiplicity of opposing talent, authority itself has left individuals and taken refuge in universals—that is, in institutions or systems.

We have seen often in our boyhood beautiful exhibitions of the natural reverence of youth for age, and for wisdom's crown of glory, the hoary head. We have seen a hundred little urchins just let loose from school, and to all appearance reckless of any other discipline but that of bodily fear, suddenly subdued to respectful silence, and awful yet fond regard, at the mild and placid appearance of a venerable clergyman who used to exemplify, in his daily visits of benevolence, the model so beautifully depicted by Goldsmith, in his Deserted Village, and which we hope, for the sake of humanity, is still to be found in some hallowed nooks of yet uncorrupted society:—

"The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal each honest rustic ran;
Even children follow'd with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress'd.
To them his heart, his love, his grief were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm.
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

We have seen this in a village, but we never saw it in a city. Such a man would be passed by in the metropolis unhonored and unknown. Nay, if he had an unfashionable hat on, he would be the object of ridicule and rude witticism to many; and if he had a pocket-handkerchief looking out of his pocket behind, some little conveyancer would, in spite of the reverence due to age and virtue, make a transference of the property, and feel as little compunction of conscience as if he had "served him right;" and should the old gentleman recount the circumstance to a metropolitan family, it would only afford a subject for merriment, and he himself would be obliged by example to laugh at the perpetration of a crime. Large cities are not the places for individual sovereignty of talent. Veneration does not dwell in the crowded streets or the market-places; it is retired in its habits; it prefers the mountains and the villages, it is a patriarch of the olden times, and dies in the smoke of a manufacturing district, or amid the hum of a political metropolis.

Nor does this remark apply to public men alone, but to parents also. Filial reverence is less vigorous in town than in the country, more especially if the parent has adopted town principles of personal independence and individual rights. These instinctively communicate themselves to children, and by them are applied to their own insubordinate ends. Both parents and school-teachers complain at present of increased unruliness on the part of children. The complaint is not new, we believe. It has always been the complaint of age that the present times are more unruly than the past. Even in the days of Solomon it was so. "Say not thou what is the cause that the former days were better than these, for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this thing." But in this conclusion of the wise king we cordially concur. It is not wise in any man to regret the past; for the world is undergoing a course of education, and the insubordination of modern times is an important part of the course. There is good mixed up with the evil; there is an increase of intelligence, which, in due time, will surmount the evil; but the simple fact, notwithstanding, may remain, that, compared to ancient times, there is greater insubordination amongst children at present, both in schools and families. Boys even dare as well as their parents, to think for themselves and calculate the time when they will be free from control. Girls imbibe tastes and fancies—the rising fashions of the day—and are alienated from their parents who withhold their sanction; and pupils threaten teachers to leave their schools, if the teachers correct them for misbehavior, or refuse to allow them unreasonable indulgencies—destructive of order and scholastic discipline. What children feel is very difficult to ascertain; but we see very little in New York or its vicinity of that holy fear and respect with which we used to look upon our elders.

PERSONALITIES.

MR. BONNER.—*Dear Sir*:—I inclose you an article taken from the —— ——, which criticises your system of advertising rather severely. Thinking that you might want to reply to it, I concluded to send it to you.

With my best wishes for the LEDGER's prosperity, believe me to be one of its numerous admirers. R. F——.

We would inform our friend "R. F.," that we have no space to devote to personal controversies in the LEDGER. Our patrons, the great reading public, do not want matter of that sort served up to them—they get too much of it already in snarling little papers all over the country that seem to have nothing better to do than to blackguard and abuse each other. We prefer not to stoop to such petty, mean, nonsensical business. We aim to make a paper for the people—not a medium for quarreling with or villifying our editorial brethren. So that, hereafter, when our friend "R. F." sees the "LEDGER" mentioned in any other paper, either in a complimentary or censorious manner, he will please bear in mind that, under no circumstances, can we be dragged into a petty personal controversy. The LEDGER, with its immense circulation, is not disposed thus to dignify comparatively unknown and obscure sheets. We mean to "*mind our own business*," whether other editors do so or not, and to make each of our readers feel that the LEDGER is *his* paper—not *ours*.

A MISERABLE QUIBBLE.

A miserable quibble has been put forth by the voluntary organs of the British Government in this country, to shield that impertinent and tyrannical Government from the just consequences of the acts of their naval captains in boarding our merchantmen. The quibble is that we confound the *right of search*, which has been given up by the British Government, with the *right of visitation*, which they have not given up. This is an absurd distinction. If a British captain has a right to "bring-to" an American ship and compel her to receive him on board, she is of course under his jurisdiction, and he can stay on board a day, a week, a month, or a year as well as an hour, if he so elect. It was the *principle of non-interference with our flag on the high seas*, for which we fought and conquered in the war of 1812, and we will fight and conquer for the same principle again, if need be. We will not permit the emissaries of any government thus impertinently to intrude themselves upon the decks of our vessels.

ATTEMPTING TOO MUCH.

It is a quite common habit with many well-meaning people, to undertake too much, the consequence whereof is that they do nothing successfully—often fail utterly in what they essay to accomplish!

This tendency is specially observable in young people. Their youthful blood is warm and active. The heart beats freely. The pulse is vigorous, bespeaking an activity which it fails to indicate in manhood's years. A sense of "young life" fills every vein, and thrills along every nerve from the brain to the heart. For these reasons youth is hopeful, and always looking forward in expectation of something to come. With youth, impulse is always dominant; and hence it not only expects too much, but undertakes too much, and too many things at a time. This sometimes leads to disastrous results and life-long misfortunes. Young people should beware of having too many irons in the fire.

AGAIN "ON HIS LEGS."

The public's old favorite, P. T. Barnum, is again "on his legs," and at his old business of making everybody open their eyes wide with astonishment. Barnum, as is always the case with men of talent and originality, has been distinguished for doing "big things." He does what his imitators would not have thought of doing, or what they would not have *dared* to do had they thought of it. That is the difference between an original and imitators. Barnum's Jenny Lind enterprise was the most daring thing of the kind ever attempted; and now he is about inaugurating another musical crusade of a still greater magnitude. He proposes to import, next autumn, for the delectation of his fellow-citizens, the entire grand opera and ballet companies of Her Majesty's Opera House, in London, with all their instruments, wardrobes, and costly paraphernalia. This is certainly a most stupendous enterprise, and will bring Barnum before the public once more in all his old prominence and glory.

MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL.

Some people talk and behave as if they thought rest was simply abstinence from labor. And yet, one of the most tiresome things, in human experience, is long-continued idleness. We once knew a wealthy youth who got so tired of a career of this sort, that he actually went to his guardian, and asked it, as a favor, to be permitted to work, day in and day out, along with field hands, at the usual wages. Although his guardian laughed at the very idea, and the laborers looked, he persisted in his request till it was granted, and then he astonished everybody that knew him by working unflaggingly the season through. In so doing he not only found true rest to his body and mind, but at the same time made himself useful in the world.

DO WE LIVE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY?—A few days ago we received a pamphlet entitled, "THE SABBATH, *a Festival: appointed for recreation and enjoyment.*" This document is written by a man who calls himself *a clergyman*, and is no more nor less than an argument for the desecration of the Sabbath. The only comment that we care to make on this work is contained in the caption of our paragraph, "Do we live in the nineteenth century?"

A MISER grows rich by seeming poor; an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A LEAF FOR PAUL PRY.

There may be some authoresses who like to be stared at: I am not going to contest that point; there may be some who are gratified, when they enter a ferry-boat or car, to have somebody nudge everybody in the ribs, and whisper loud enough to be heard from Maine to California—Look! that's Dolly Daffodil, the authoress. There may be some who like, when they sit down in an omnibus, to have a lady (?) or gentleman (?) opposite make the same remark, with the following additions: Light hair, hasn't she?—wavy?—tall?—dressed in black?—wonder what's her fancy for always wearing black?—how do you like her mantilla?—funny that she always wears a straw bonnet—and various other edifying remarks of the same nature. This may be very civil. I don't wish to say it is not. There may be some authoresses who like, when they go to church, to have the people in the next pew dislocate their necks in the attempt to ascertain what Dolly Daffodil looks like; whether she holds her hymn-book upside down, or down side up, or is guilty of the heteredox-ity of not following the hymn at all, as laid down in the programme. It is a great help to devotion to be told in church, within an inch of your nose, that you are fine-looking, or the contrary; and it may be pleasant for some authoresses, after services are over, to have the people in the pew so absorbed taking an inventory of their chin, eyes, nose, and dress, that they quite forget to let them go home to dinner. I don't wish to find fault with these little Sunday diversions—not at all. It may be very pleasant for them at the opera to have a gentleman turn round, at a whisper from his neighbor, with a *very* audible "you don't say so?"—and resting his arm on the back of the seat before them, take a double-barreled stare straight into their faces, and then remark with regard to the gentleman who accompanies them—"husband, I suppose?" and then to see his wiseacre informant nod an oracular assent; when said gentleman is only a friend of your husband's. It may be fun for Dolly Daffodil to sit behind a couple who fancy they have discovered Dolly Daffodil, the authoress, on the opposite side of the house, in the person of a lady dressed within an inch of her life. It may be fun to hear them, after exhausting the bogus authoress through an opera-glass, wonder how her husband likes to see her dressed so extravagantly, and how long her publishers can afford to supply such a wardrobe as *that*; and how funny it is, after all, that books will buy diamonds. It may be funny for Dolly Daffodil's tall daughter, who happens to have hair like her mother's, to be mistaken for Dolly Daffodil, and ogled and commented upon, till the poor thing is as red as a pulpit-cushion. I don't wish to say it isn't, this is a free country, a *very* free country. It may be agreeable for some authoresses to stand like a prize ox, or a trotting horse, or a milliner's lay-figure, to have their physical points discussed; to hear, time after time, the dimensions of their hips, ankles, shoulders, and waist. They may think New York is the central point of good manners, and good breeding in these respects; I don't deny it. New York, herself, may think that, because an authoress can't pucker up her mouth to call the *leg* of a table the *limb* of a table, that it therefore follows she may not have modesty enough to object to being stared out of countenance, or informed that she is an authoress at every street-corner; and it may be an indelible mark of a lady, or a gentleman, to do this, in those loud, *musical* tones which this population has acquired by taging from their Knickerbocker cradles, to out-yell the deafening din of omnibusses. I don't say it isn't. I don't complain—not at all. As the big blacksmith said, when his wife whipped him—"It does her a great deal of good, and, after all, it don't hurt me any." FANNY FERN.

GOLD AND SILVER DESPOTISM.

Of all sciences most difficult in practice, or to get men to practice, is that of placing gold and silver in their true place as representatives of the trading capital of a country. Gold, being made a standard of value instead of a security for paper currency, is permitted to affect all the operations of trade and commerce of a nation, just as it happens to be plenty or scarce in the balance of exchanges. Thus the ebbs and flows of foreign trade are enabled to regulate directly, and affect arbitrarily, the value of all property, including the labor of the poor man's hands, although he may have never had ought to do with a foreign market.

The idea of suffering a mere fraction of floating capital, as gold and silver undoubtedly are, to to raise or decrease the rates of interest on all capital, and contract its value, is a wrong that has too long existed. That the abstraction of five or ten millions of specie from a floating capital of thousands of millions of more real capital in labor, land, produce, and manufactures, should at once exert a controlling influence to depreciate the value of all the rest, to which it should have borne only a relative influence, so that the wages of labor and the prices of products to the remotest parts of the country are affected, is worthy the serious thought of every one.

The only real remedy is to make gold and silver a standard of security for paper circulation, and establish such commercial confidence in it that the paper evidence of the deposit of gold, in duly guarded banks, shall be a legal tender in all payments, so that upon any rise or fall in the value of gold, growing out of exchanges, banks can shield themselves by tendering paper. Gold then could only rise in value through foreign drain, and the whole money power of a country would be enlisted to promote the export of its produce and manufactures as the only means of preventing a drain, the result of which prevention must inevitably be to diminish the exchangeable power of money over all other commodities, including the poor man's labor. Gold, as now valued in the commercial and financial world, plays the part of an imperious, pampered tyrant.

ARCHITECTURAL IMPROVEMENTS.

One of the most marked features in the improvements which are constantly going on in this city is the architectural beauty of the new buildings erected, upon which money and skill are lavished without stint. As an example of this lavishness in architectural ornamentation, we think the edifice recently erected by the proprietors of the New York Times, on the site of the old Brick Church, stands conspicuous. It towers in grand and beautiful proportions, and is an ornament to the city, as well as a monument of the enterprise of our neighbors of the Times; and we look upon it as a most significant fact in the history of journalism, that a newspaper office should consist of a palatial structure, which a few years since would have been considered a piece of extravagance, even if it had been erected by some public and incorporated institution.

WHAT IS LIFE?

BY MARY FORREST.

The calm, on-looking Sphinx, whose riddle has found no Œdipus.

An unrivaled Yesterday; a tortuous wake of foot-prints, growing less and less—lost in the sweet dream of childhood—mother, home, and a close-bending Heaven.

The broad green-sward of To-day, whereon our feet are planted; the play-ground, the battle-field, the altar-place, the stern reality, the beautiful bubble of Now; that strange twin-sister, who, even while we walk hand in hand with her, fades into a myth.

An ignis-fatuus To-morrow; a lovely, impearled, but delusive May-be; a mysterious vail, receding with each step of human progress, yet never lifted; a ceaseless, voiceless, resistless, inscrutable "On!"

The child's shock of gold—the old man's crown of silver.

The brook just rippling from the hill-side—the still, dark river.

A June morning with green leaves and dew-drops, birds and flowers; a parched and dust-stained August noon; a December twilight of gray mists and shadows; an uncalendared night!

A walk down the thoroughfare of a great city, when its counter-tides are in full flow, crowds this mystery upon the thoughtful mind almost painfully. There is no escape. More alone than in the heart of the wildest forest, we must meet, and helplessly echo the cry—"Life, life, what is it?"

Ask them, one and all, as they press in surging currents this way and that. With a gushing laugh and quick lifting of eyes swimming in light, the sweet maiden will answer, "Life! O, life is father, mother, home and friends," and the warm blush tells of a richer element unworded. The serene matron—true type of a God-made womanhood—will tell you, "It is an earnest of immortality." Innocent, rosy-cheeked children will point you to the window of the toy-shop; the doll and rocking-horse are life to them. Brave manhood will answer, "Life is a race-course." The trembling voices of white-haired men and women will whisper, "A troubled stream, almost lost in the great ocean." Frail fair ones, in flaunting robes, from whose brows has been dashed out the beautiful tracery of pure thoughts, will start back in horror at the ill-timed query, or shriek defiantly, "Life is a mockery!" The bacchanal and debauchee will tell you, "It is a sparkling chalice, to be drained quickly, lest the eternal sleep find some pleasure untasted." The miserable procession of blind, lame, deformed, squalid and hideous will cry with one accord, "Life is a great treadmill of woe!" We turn away sickened, and our haunting mystery, like

"The raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting,
On the pallid bust of Pallas."

The complicated angles and curves of our problem defy solution. We can only hold it in keeping for the scope of the angel. The soul must still listen, and wonder, and chafe in its clay walls, assured by these signs, indeed, of its immortality—dreaming dreams and seeing visions, but with no power to reach, and utter forth the strange apocalypse.

HAPPINESS.

"This new and gorgeous garment
Sits not so easy on me as you think."

Incessant, earnest, ardent, is man's pursuit of Happiness—the philosopher's stone of every age and nation since Eve's transgression drove our first parents from its earthly abode, and rendered its attainment so difficult to their descendants. Ponderous tomes of divinity, huge volumes of philosophy, essays without number, maxims without end, have been written to assist us in the pursuit; and, certainly, when we lose our way it is not from a deficiency of finger-posts on the road. Yet, stale as the subject is, it can scarcely be uninteresting.

Happiness is more equally and more generally diffused than is usually imagined. A mighty magician, silent and invisible in his operations, is ever at work to produce this equilibrium; and few are the circumstances of life which can resist the incessant touch of his powerful fingers. This magician is Habit, the friend of heaven, who renders self-denial easy and pleasant to the virtuous; the ally of hell, by whom the wicked are familiarized to crime. It is Habit that takes away their relish from the luxuries of the rich, and makes the coarse fare of the peasant palatable and sweet;—that makes the husband gaze uncharmed on the thousand beauties which enchanted the lover, and listen unirritated to those querulous tones and sharp rebukes which, in earlier days, nearly drove him distracted!

To those possessed of a clear conscience, of Christian hopes, of health, and ease, and competence, it would appear that Happiness ought to be a close companion—an inseparable handmaid; yet this is not the case; and we frequently find more fretfulness and complaining, more vapid days and restless nights among the children of affluence, surrounded by a thousand blessings, than among those who rise every morning to a routine of hardship and of labor. Let no one expect ecstasies in this life, but consider the absence of pain as pleasure, seize every moment of calm enjoyment with grateful alacrity, and duly estimate the blessings of peace and of repose.

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

On the day previous to the execution of the murderer Williams at Harrisburg, Penn., his little son, a bright and beautiful lad of some six summers, in company with his aged and infirm maternal grand-parent, visited him in his lonely cell. The little lad did not recognize his father immediately on entering; his tender age and long separation, however, sufficiently accounts for this. The eyes of the father, at sight of his son, plainly spoke the emotions of his heart; he took him in his arms, kissed him lovingly, and caressed him tenderly. His heart was too full for utterance; he pressed him silently to his bosom, with thoughts and feelings much more easily imagined than described. This incident was touching; the "stoutest and bravest" could not help shedding a tear of sympathy for both. The parting, if possible, was yet more affecting; when the trying time came, the Rev. Dr. Bartine, who was present at the interview, requested that a parting hymn should be sung: "Farewell, kind friends, we now must part," was accordingly selected by the kind Reverend. During the singing Williams sat calmly upon his humble bed, with his darling offspring clasped in his arms, his eyes bathed in tears, the pure outgushing, no doubt, of a contrite heart and paternal affection.

A GOOD ONE.—The Editor of the *Louisville* (Ky.) *Journal*, in replying to a well-known clergyman who had spoken of his State in disrespectful terms, retorts:

"In asserting what he does he violates the ninth commandment, and we presume he is impartial enough to treat the whole decalogue alike."

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

FORTY years ago our wiseacres predicted that, when all could read and write, we should find none to black our shoes. The day of predicted evil has arrived; everybody can read and write, and our shoes are not only better blacked than ever, but they are polished by comparatively polished people; our blacking-makers acquire fortunes and build palaces, thus giving encouragement to other arts than the black one; and it is even said that two or three London firms keep regular poets pensioned upon their establishments to write poetical puffs.

CURIOSITY is a thing that makes us look over other people's affairs and overlook our own. If a spy may be executed by the laws of war, surely a Paul Pry may be kicked or horsewhipped by the laws of society. You can have no peace with such a man unless you declare war against him. Xenocrates, reprehending curiosity, said, it is as rude to intrude into another man's house with your eyes as with your feet.

AN instance of the distinction without a difference was offered by the Irishman, who, having legs of different sizes, ordered boots to be made accordingly. His directions were obeyed; but, as he tried the smaller boot on the larger leg, he exclaimed, indignantly, "Confound the fellow! I ordered him to make one *larger* than the other, and, instead of that, he has made one *smaller* than the other."

SOME people would like to wipe away every drop of dewy freshness and beauty from Nature's face with a napkin, and make a droll old day of it before the morning is an hour and a half old.

"YOU and I," said one partisan to another, "are pretty familiar with the villanies of politicians, but yours is the familiarity of an accomplice, whilst mine is that of the officer of the law who detects and punishes."

"SHALL we not make hay while the sun shines?" said a fat old chap to his wife. "Oh, yes; and, as all flesh is grass, and the sun is bright, perhaps you had better cut your throat and make yourself hay as soon as possible."

AN offensive correspondent asks us if we can tell him anything about the hemp-market in Kentucky. We have no doubt in the world, that, if he shall visit Kentucky, hemp will be *tight*.

"I EXPECT," said a violent southern politician, the other day, "to take the ears of a dozen of my opponents in this canvass." "You already have a pair as long as a dozen ordinary ones," said a bystander.

A MAN'S profundity may keep him from saying anything on his first interview, and his caution on a second; but we may well suspect his emptiness if he carries on his reserve to a third.

WE recently saw two men quarreling. One of them was excessively violent at first, but became perfectly calm the moment the other got violent. He was cured as doctors sometimes cure maladies—by counter-irritation.

"I HAVE insulted you, and you will have to brook the insult," said a little man to a big one. "I will brook *you*," said the big one, taking him up and tossing him into the middle of a stream near by.

DESTINY is the scape-goat which we make responsible for all our crimes and follies; a necessity which is set down as invincible, when we have no wish to strive against it.

A LAME fellow wanted to enlist as a volunteer in the military service. "You wouldn't do," said the recruiting officer; "the more we ordered you to march, the more you would *halt*."

"IF you touch my dog, you touch me," said a pert young man to a lady. "Sir, I know very well, that if I touch you I touch a dog."

"Is your powder good?" "A barrel of it took fire the other day, and, before I could bring a bucket of water, half of it was burned up."

"Why do you admire that young lady so very much?" "Sir, I have never seen her except on foot, but I admire her for her remarkably fine *carriage*."

THERE is one essential difference between the NEW YORK LEDGER and its would-be rivals—its good things are without end, and theirs without beginning.

FISHERMEN are very apt to think, after tramping for a few hours, that the best bite they get is the bite they have taken along with them.

NONE know the full extent of present hate but those who have achieved the highest meed of future approbation.

FALSEHOOD is often rocked by truth, but she soon outgrows her cradle and discards her nurse.

THE rage for the scarlet petticoat is, perhaps, on the whole, rather a harmless kind of scarlet fever.

INSULTS are counterfeit money; we can't help their being offered, but we needn't take them.

A MAN passes for a sage if he seeks for wisdom; if he thinks he has found it, he is a fool.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A NEW and effective method of swelling a church collection was recently adopted in Roxbury, Mass. The officiating clergyman addressed a very few words to his congregation, to the effect that ministers are much needed, that those present should disburse liberally, and, doubtless to reach them more effectually, said that the usual collectors would be dispensed with. He then proceeded through the church, contribution box in hand, the choir singing meantime. Having performed the circuit of the edifice, he stated that the amount obtained would be announced next Sunday, adding, with *naivete*, that, judging from the weight of the box, he had no doubt the contribution was quite respectable.

THE news from Utah is becoming strangely interesting. It is said that Brigham Young is getting quite beside himself, and rushes from the extreme of rage and ferocity to the extreme of humility and cowardice, with a frequency which indicates an unsettled purpose and vacillating will. He recently assaulted and knocked down one of his forty wives for suggesting that he had better yield peaceably to the United states authorities, and a short time afterwards knocked down and brutally kicked one of his men for advocating "war to the knife." The fact is, Brigham is no doubt partially insane.

THE Mississippi has overflowed its banks to such an extent in the region above and below Yazoo, that the swamps are inundated, and the wild animals driven upon the high ground nearer the river. There are bears, snakes, wild hogs, and all manner of "varmints" in profusion. One huge black bear paid Yazoo itself a visit, and threw the inhabitants into a state of consternation, but a dozen rifle balls soon tamed him. The village of Iberville, lower down the river, in Louisiana, was ten feet under water at the last accounts.

A BODY of United States troops, on their way to Utah, across the Rocky Mountains, not long since came upon a whole "settlement" of grizzly bears. There were about forty of the animals, in a sheltered ravine, and they no sooner saw the troops than they advanced with open mouths to attack them. But the soldiers poured such a deadly volley into the crowd that they drew back in terror, and attempted to escape; but only a few of them succeeded in getting away. Thirty-two of their carcasses were found and skinned.

A RESOLUTION was offered in a late convention of clergymen in New Orleans, that, as the next Fourth of July comes on Sunday, special prayer be offered up on that day all over the country for the prosperity and religious improvement of the nation, the hour of prayer to be fixed according to longitudinal differences, so that at the same hour, irrespective of the time of day at any place, prayer all over the country will ascend at once. The resolution was adopted.

A BARBAROUS woman, living in Cumberland-street, Brooklyn, a few days since attacked a beautiful little girl who was playing on the sidewalk before her parents' door, and beat her so shamefully in the face that the child's countenance was badly cut and disfigured, giving as a reason therefor that *somebody* had thrown stones at *her* little girl. The virago was taken to a police-station and fined $3. She ought to have been imprisoned three months.

FOUR miners in Australia not long since found a lump of gold which is worth nearly thirty-six thousand dollars. They intend to exhibit this "monster lump" in England and the United States. It will "draw," and no mistake.

AN emulator of Sam Patch recently leaped from the top of the mainmast of a ship lying in the East River, near the Peck Slip ferry, in order to escape an officer who was climbing the rigging after him. The bold fellow escaped.

MR. SAMUEL SLANSON, supervisor of the town of Greenville, Sullivan County, N. Y., recently hung himself, in his hay house. He left a note, saying that his reason for committing suicide was, that he was tired of living.

THE "gift enterprise" business has fallen into such contempt that scarcely any one now dare acknowledge himself to be in any way connected with it.

RACHEL, THE WASHERWOMAN.

A Ballad.

BY ALICE CARY.

At the north end of our village stands,
With gable black and high,
A weatherbeaten house—I've stopt,
Often, as I went by,

To see the strip of bleaching grass
Slipped brightly in between
The long, straight rows of hollyhocks,
And currant-bushes, green;

The clumsy bench beside the door,
And oaken washing-tub,
Where poor old Rachel used to stand,
And rub, and rub, and rub!

Her blue checked apron speckled with
The suds, so snowy white;
From morning when I went to school
Till I went home at night,

She never took her sunburnt arms
Out of the steaming tub,—
We used to say 'twas weary work
Only to hear her rub.

With sleeves stretched straight upon the grass
The washed shirts used to lie;
By dozens I have counted them
Some days, as I went by.

The burly blacksmith, battering at
His red-hot iron bands,
Would make a joke of wishing that
He had old Rachel's hands!

And when the sharp and ringing strokes
Had doubled up his shoe,
As crooked as old Rachel's back,
He used to say 'twould do.

And every village housewife, with
A conscience clear and light,
Would send for her to come and wash
An hour or two at night!

Her hair beneath her cotton cap
Grew silver-white, and thin;
And the deep furrows in her face
Ploughed all the roses in.

Yet patiently she kept at work—
We school-girls used to say
The smile about her sunken mouth
Would quite go out, some day.

Nobody ever thought the spark,
That in her sad eyes had shone,
Burned outward from a living soul
Immortal as their own.

And though a tender flush sometimes
Into her cheek would start,
Nobody dreamed old Rachel had
A woman's loving heart!

At last she left her heaps of clothes
One quiet autumn day,
And stript from off her sunburnt arms
The weary suds away;

That night within her moonlit door
She sat alone—her chin
Sunk in her hand—her eyes shut up
As if to look within.

Her face uplifted to the star
That stood so sweet and low
Against old crazy Peter's house—
(He loved her long ago!)

Her heart had worn her body to
A handful of poor dust—
Her soul was gone to be arrayed
In marriage robes, I trust.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER LII.

LADY BELL'S PLOT.

In the midst of his own happiness, and the feeling was bright and strong as youth and love could make it, Richard Tyrrell did not forget the duty he had undertaken to the poor, forlorn youth, who had once been his companion, and, in the eyes of the world, almost, if not quite, his equal.

In their long and frequent conversations, he found occasion to study his character, and quickly discovered that his errors had truly been errors of ignorance. No one had ever taught him that honesty was to be adhered to for honesty's sake. All he knew was that the world both looked upon and treated him as a pariah, and he had retaliated, as outcasts generally do.

Regularly did our hero devote several hours daily in teaching Jack to read and write, and it was extraordinary how rapid a progress he made. Gratitude is a powerful incentive.

"Now, Jack," said his instructor, "when you have mastered the next two rules of arithmetic, and put your words together a little better, I promise you a recompense you little dream of."

"I don't require any," replied his pupil. "Your kindness to me is quite recompense enough."

"Aye, but you will enjoy this."

"I won't have it!" exclaimed Jack Manders, with something like his former speech and determination. "You have done enough for me already, more than my whole life can ever repay."

"Suppose it was to present you to an old friend again?"

"Poor Caleb," answered the former.

"I don't mean Caleb."

"I have no other friend."

"Have you forgotten Lillian?"

Her former protector bounded from his seat as if he had received an unexpected electrical shock, and stood for an instant mute with surprise and emotion.

"Don't jest with me," he said; "pray don't jest with me. How should Lilly be in India, poor little angel, her sorrows are over, I trust, by this time."

"I trust so, too," observed Richard, smilingly.

Jack Manders looked at him anxiously.

"But not in the way you suppose. Circumstances which I must explain hereafter, for I am not yet in possession of all the facts myself, drew on the orphan the protection of one of the noblest and best of men. He and his wife have reared her like their own child. She accompanied them from England.

"Oh, Mr. Richard!" exclaimed the lad, "can this be true? And yet I am a fool to ask it—for Providence, that you so often talked to me about, watched over you. And why should I doubt her escaping from the cruelty of Mike and Andrew, and the fine lady who employed them?"

It is needless to say how earnestly Jack devoted himself to the task of self-improvement. His instructor, even sooner than he expected, found himself called upon to fulfill his promise.

Previous to doing so, he found it necessary once more to consult Sir Charles Fourreau, for he looked upon his recommendation to conceal a portion of his early life from Lillian in the light of a command.

"This is indeed remarkable," exclaimed the gallant soldier, when he had heard him to an end; "and Providence, which is wiser than poor blind mortals dream of, is working for our good. This is the first time that I have heard of Lady Boothroyd having been mixed up in the affair. I must see Rose and her husband."

Both were sent for. Mark Rayner, whose exemplary conduct in his regiment, to say nothing of the influence of Lady Bell, had won for him the grade of sergeant-major, was quickly summoned, together with his wife, to the presence of the colonel. When they beheld him seated in the library with our hero by his side, both dreaded that the explanation they felt anxious to avoid was now inevitable, for they had remarked the attentions of Richard to Lillian.

"Mark," said the baronet, "I have sent for you in order to obtain some information respecting my

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words "stolen from him." He was one of those men who never compromise with principle.

"By whom?"

"By my unhappy husband," replied Rose, "and myself, for I shared his guilt. But it was forced upon us. Vainly we struggled to avoid the crime; we had fallen into the hands of one who mocked at our prayers, and knew not the meaning of pity."

"Lady Boothroyd?" demanded the baronet.

The unhappy wife, believing that the vindictive woman had fulfilled her threat, and denounced Mark as the murderer of the keeper, could scarcely articulate the word "Yes."

"And her motives?"

Rose briefly related the dispute which had so long existed between Sir Norman and his tenants, touching the right of shooting on the common, the arrival of Barny Gee on New Year's eve, the poaching party, and its fatal results.

"Mark, I presume, was one of them?" observed Sir Charles.

"He was."

"I will not press you with any further questions," said the gentleman, "although my opinion is clear that he yielded to a groundless fear. For, even had he been present on the occasion, and fired the fatal shot, a thing difficult to prove, the crime could only have amounted to manslaughter."

These words were the first gleam of consolation respecting the horrible event which had exercised such a fatal influence upon her happiness that Rose had received, for they afforded her hope, lessened the fear which haunted her, and she looked towards her husband in surprise, mingled with speechless gratitude.

"Still I cannot comprehend her ladyship's motives," continued the speaker, "for such an extraordinary step."

"Pride!" exclaimed Rose. "After poor Barny's death, a paper was found upon him signed by Lieutenant Alan Boothroyd, the brother of Sir Norman, stating that the wounded man had saved his life. The whole village cried shame upon the heartless lord of the manor, and she felt that whilst Lillian remained at St. Faith's, the events of New Year's eve would not be forgotten."

"Possible," thought the gentleman, "but improbable, for the abduction was a clear case of felony." Then, speaking aloud, he asked "if there was any doubt of Lillian being really the child of Barny?"

"Not the least!" exclaimed both husband and wife; "he brought her with him on the night of his arrival, and left her in the care of his brother."

Having dismissed them with the assurance that he should still continue his protection to Mark, the worthy man turned to our hero, who had hitherto listened in silence to the conversation, and asked his opinion.

"I believe her ladyship had some other motive," replied Richard Tyrrell, decidedly; "the one assigned is ridiculously inadequate."

"I think so, too; and to discover it shall be the object of my endeavors. You know the man, I believe, to whose charge she gave poor Lillian?"

"Yes."

"And his character?"

"Most vile; he forced his nephew to dishonesty."

"All of which confirms my suspicions," observed the baronet. "The story of your former companion interests me, independently of his protection of Lillian, who has spoken of him and described him to me a thousand times. I will prepare her for the meeting," he added, "by relating to her as much of your story as is necessary to explain the kind interest you have taken in his welfare."

The following day Jack, who had already recovered something of his former appearance, and been well dressed by his protector, accompanied him to the residence of Sir Charles Fourreau. Lillian, whose grateful heart recollected him only as a boy, sprang forward to meet him with the apparent intention of offering her cheek to his salute. But a feeling of maidenly modesty restrained her, and she extended her hand, exclaiming—

"Oh! how happy I feel at once more beholding you."

Jack colored deeply. He scarcely recognized in the graceful, lovely girl before him the timid child that trembled at every word Mike uttered, and in her helplessness had clung to him for his protection. He now saw her surrounded by affectionate friends, in the splendid home of her second parents; and yet, somehow, the change did not afford him unmixed pleasure, it made the distance between them too apparent.

"You are very good, Miss," he faltered, "to recollect me!"

"Call me Lilly," replied our heroine, her eyes filling with tears. "And as for recollecting you, my heart must be insensible to every sentiment of gratitude before I forget you. Were you not to me as a brother?"

"A very humble one."

"But a true one," interrupted the fair girl; "tell me all that has passed since Mike took you from the cottage; I am anxious to learn."

With some slight hesitation, for Jack Manders had never before found himself in such society, the poor fellow narrated the cruel manner in which his uncle had trepanned him, the brutal treatment he had experienced on board the Caradoc, where, but for the kindness of Bunce and Caleb, he must have succumbed to the captain's systematic persecution.

"Heaven reward them for their goodness," sighed Lillian, deeply moved at the recital of her former companion's sufferings.

"Who is this Caleb?" inquired Lady Bell.

"An apprentice on board ship."

"And how was he treated?"

"Scarcely better than myself."

"Richard," exclaimed Lillian, her countenance flushed with indignation at the tale of sorrow, "can we not contrive some means to rescue this poor fellow from the heartless tyranny of his captain?"

"I have been thinking of it," replied our hero.

"Alas, he has signed his indentures," added Jack.

The fair pleader turned an imploring look upon Sir Charles.

"I can take but one step to liberate him from his slavery," observed his guardian.

"And that is?"

"By an appeal to a court of justice."

"Captain Gall would murder him," exclaimed Jack, "before it could be decided. I tried it in China, before the consul."

"And the result?"

"They refused to listen to me," replied the young man, blushing deeply, for he but too well remembered the cause.

"Can nothing be done?" said Lillian, anxiously.

"Of course there can," answered Lady Bell, whose beneficent heart rejoiced in alleviating sorrow in whatever form it presented itself to her notice. "The first thing will be to get him on shore."

"I will undertake that," exclaimed our hero.

"And the next?" said her husband, smilingly—for there is little doubt he had an inkling of her purpose.

"Enlist him into your regiment," answered his wife. "A court of justice alone could compel you to give him up."

"That is true."

"Where the question must first be tried."

"Solon could not have come to a more wise conclusion."

"And his friends could then bring forward proofs of cruelty sufficient to justify the breaking of the indentures, or whatever you call them."

There was very little doubt but Lady Bell had suggested the only real solution of the difficulty; and the question was, how to proceed to insure the escape of Caleb. As a matter of course, Sir Charles could take no part in that.

"Go away, Charlie," exclaimed his wife. "We are plotting treason. You must not listen to us."

"Certainly not."

"Or thwart us."

"Still less."

"When the time comes for you to act as an ally, you shall be called upon," added the lady, playfully.

The baronet withdrew to the veranda, lit a cigar, and, seeing Major Plinlimmon walking on the parade-ground, hastened to join him.

"Now that we are alone, the council of war is opened," resumed her ladyship, with mock gravity. "In the first place, you will require assistance, for, no doubt, since the escape of Jack, the monster of a captain has taken double precautions to prevent his companion following his example."

This was pronounced a positive conclusion.

"In the first place, there is Raynor."

"You forget," observed Lillian, "that he is a soldier."

"He need not go in uniform," was the reply to the objection; "and we can trust to him. There are several of the officers," she continued; "but, on second thoughts, which some wise heads pronounce to be invariably the best, we will not employ them."

"I must suggest one exception," said Richard.

"And who is that in favor of?"

"Fred Wharton."

"Your melancholy friend," exclaimed Lady Bell, with a laugh. "I had forgotten him; he may be trusted; for, beneath an armor of reserve, I am much deceived if there beats not a kind heart."

"You only do him justice."

"I had forgotten all this while that we have a friend in the enemy's camp, a sailor on board the Caradoc," exclaimed Richard.

"And what is his name?" inquired Lillian.

Our hero looked at Jack for a reply; he had forgotten it.

"Bunce," replied the youth.

Lady Bell gravely wrote it down in her note-book, and then ran over the contents of the page on which she had all the time been scribbling.

"Let me see," she exclaimed, "our opponents are Captain Gall, his mate, and the crew of the Caradoc, minus Bunce."

"Exactly so."

"To meet them we have Richard, myself——"

"A tower of strength," said Richard, gallantly.

"Thank you, but don't interrupt me," replied the lady. "Next, Lieutenant Fred Wharton, and Jack Manders. Why, what are we deliberating about?" she asked; "the odds are so completely in our favor that I almost fear we shall be accused of cowardice in the event of employing all our strength."

At this good-humored sally there was a general smile.

"Still, we wait for orders," observed our hero.

"You shall have them."

Lady Bell hastily wrote a few lines, tore them from the case, and placed them in the hands of Richard.

"Excellent!" he exclaimed; "this cannot fail. Your ladyship would make an excellent commander-in-chief."

"You being my aide-de-camp, I suppose?" replied the lady. "But seriously, I think my project cannot fail, for it has humanity on its side, and zealous hearts to execute it."

The council being ended, Sir Charles was beckoned to rejoin them from the veranda.

Full of his generous design of liberating Caleb from the tyranny of Captain Gall, Richard Tyrrell lost no time in securing the assistance of the young cornet—the very fellow to feel his heart swell at a story of oppression, for he had suffered from it; and the memory of wrong is one of the last that fades.

The usually impassible countenance of Fred Wharton flushed as he listened to the description of the poor lad's sufferings; and his clear blue eyes—in which thought and contemplation revealed themselves—flashed with a fire which a casual observer would have deemed them incapable of concentrating or expressing.

> Calm does not always prove content;
> But, like the frost on Etna's brow,
> Too oft it hides the fires unspent,
> Which rage beneath the chilling snow.

"Will you assist me?" demanded our hero, as he concluded his narrative.

"Will I not?" exclaimed the young man, warmly. "The question is almost a treason to our friendship: for it is to suppose me heartless."

"Not so. But the object of our benevolent exertion is one so far removed from your sphere that possibly you might feel——"

The speaker paused and hesitated.

"Go on," said his friend.

"But slight interest in the fortunes of a poor sailor lad. His birth, I believe, is exceedingly humble; but his heart——"

"It is from the heart I judge him," exclaimed Fred Wharton. "I am sick of the herald's mockery—the idol-worship which the wrongly-judging world pays to the adventitious accidents of rank and fortune. If ever I felt thankful for my own position in the social scale, it arises from the fact that it permitted me to choose my friends without reference to the opinions and prejudices of society—to grasp honor by the hand wherever I encountered it, and select worth instead of tinsel, gold instead of pinchbeck—although the latter may have received the stamp of fashion. Fashion!" he added, warmly, "I detest it! it is the mask hiding a moral death's head—the painting which vails the sepulchre!"

"In that case," observed Richard, quietly, "all we have to do is to concert the means."

"There," said the cornet, "I must trust entirely to you. I have an arm to assist, but a poor head to invent. What is it you propose!"

"Our first care must be to let Caleb know that he has friends who are both willing and able to assist him."

"Certainly."

"The next to contrive the means of his evasion from the Caradoc, which, I fear, may be difficult, for, since the escape of Jack Manders, the ruffianly commander is more than ever on his guard."

"Why not appeal to justice?"

"It would be useless. The poor fellow is an apprentice. His tyrant has him completely in his power."

"Surely the evidence of Jack, describing the treatment he has received——"

"Impossible."

"How so?"

"I cannot explain my reasons to you, but they are imperative. Only as a last resource can the victim I have already rescued from his brutal tyranny appear against him in a court of justice."

Our readers are perfectly aware of what those reasons were. Richard Tyrrell did not wish it to be known that his former companion and playfellow had ever lived by the exertion of a talent which, however ingenious, society has long since decided upon reprobating; or, in other words, that he had been a pickpocket.

"Do you doubt me?" added the speaker.

"No," exclaimed the young man, seriously. "For what is friendship if a doubt can shake it? Proceed."

"The secret is not mine," observed our hero; "or it would have been no longer one. It affects only my friend."

"He is your friend, then?"

"A very humble one," said, Richard; "but not the less valued on that account. We were boys—I may say children—together, and circumstances made me attached to him. He had fallen into evil hands. The man who should have protected him turned out his greatest enemy."

"The old story," ejaculated Wharton.

"Sought to corrupt his heart by implanting lessons of vice, and training him to crime, before he had reached an age to distinguish the difference between them."

"The wretch!"

"In the midst of this social degradation poor Jack displayed such goodness of heart, that an angel might have wept over his errors, and would have judged them far more mercifully than man."

"There you are right," exclaimed his hearer. "Man judges the crime alone—Heaven the temptation. But pray proceed. I have no longer any wish to listen to details which honor requires should be concealed. On one point, at least," he added, with a smile, "I may praise myself."

"And what is that?" inquired Richard Tyrrell, with a slight feeling of surprise. "I never heard you yet praise yourself for any one good quality, although your nature teems with them; enthusiastically just to others," he added, "you are severe only to yourself."

"I was simply about to remark that my friendship is stronger, far stronger, than my curiosity; and now let us change the subject. I am sick of the eternal *Ego* in conversation. Our first step is to communicate with the lad Caleb."

"It is."

"How do you propose to accomplish it? Not by going on board the Caradoc yourself, and accepting the ruffian's hospitality? You cannot wear a mask, even with a wretch like Captain Gall."

"Certainly not," replied his friend, emphatically. "As for the means of communicating with him, I have already arranged that. The after proceeding we must leave to fortune and the chapter of accidents. You know Hirim?"

"Your native groom? yes."

"The boy is intelligent," said his master, "speaks English perfectly; and what is better for our purpose, is truthful and devoted to me. Since I threatened to dismiss my steward for ill-using him, I believe he would risk his life for me."

"Which only proves," observed Wharton, "that few soils are so barren but the seeds of gratitude will take root in them, and expand, in time, into a hardy flower. You intend to make Hirim your medium of conversation with the ship?"

"I have so arranged it."

"Has the commander ever seen him?"

"I believe he has."

"Will he not recognize him—not by his features, but your livery?"

"That is the only risk; and to obviate it I intend to disguise him in the dress of one of the dingie boys, who ply their trade in fruit from ship to ship in the Hooghly. It is possible that he may not succeed in getting on board the first, or even the second time; but, by selling his wares cheaply, and furnishing himself with the freshest, I have little doubt of his ultimately succeeding."

"How will he recognize Caleb?" demanded his hearer.

"Jack has described his person so minutely that he cannot mistake him," answered our hero. "Besides, you have no idea how quick and clever Hirim is. Nature, in one of her caprices, has given him the tact of a diplomat, the agility of a monkey, and the cunning of a serpent."

"An epigram which characterises the wisdom of the East," exclaimed the young soldier, with a smile. "You ought to have been a portrait-painter, instead of a merchant."

CHAPTER LIII.

THE RESULT OF LADY BELL'S PLOT.

From the day of Jack's escape, Captain Gall had no other victim on whom he dared to exercise the brutal tyranny of his cruel nature than poor Caleb, whom he suspected of having assisted the fugitive to leave the ship. His first impulse, after questioning him more like an Old Bailey lawyer than a seaman, and failing to obtain the least clue, was to order the boy to be lashed up for punishment.

"We are in port," suggested the first mate.

The captain repeated the order with an oath.

"Weel," said the cautious Scot, "ye mun e'en gang your ain gait. It's no' my affair, but I ken the consequences."

He gave the order to the men.

We need scarcely remind our readers that for the commander of a merchantman to flog a sailor in port, within appeal to the civil authorities, is a stretch of power almost unheard-of in the service, and totally at variance with maritime law—a fact no man on board the Caradoc was better aware of than Bunce.

It was not without reason that the crew had given him the name of the sea-lawyer.

The old seaman heard the order with astonishment.

"What!" he exclaimed, as Caleb, who, hopeless of avoiding his punishment, had already begun to strip; "you don't mean to stand it?"

"What can I do?" replied the lad, mournfully.

"Refuse."

"It would be useless."

"I don't know that; I'll back you for one."

Several of the crew promised to stand by him, for all were sick of the rough usage the victim had so long been subjected to.

"Did you hear me?" shouted the captain, furious that his orders had not yet been obeyed.

There was a cry of shame.

Being in port gave the ruffian confidence—he knew how slight a chance the men would have of obtaining justice in India. He strutted, therefore, into the midst of them, his eyes flashing fire, breathing curses, threats, and imprecations on their heads.

"This," he exclaimed, "is mutiny; but we are not at sea now."

"That's why you have no right to flog him," replied Bunce. "It's against both law and justice. You may stare, and look big, Captain Gall," he added, "but I ain't afeard on you—you know I am speaking the truth."

As our readers are aware, it was not the first occasion on which the speaker had interposed between his commander and his apprentice; and this last attempt filled the cup of bitterness and ill-feeling towards him.

"Dog!" he exclaimed, enraged at not being able to carry out his design of punishing Caleb; "you have done nothing but preach mutiny since I shipped you on board the Caradoc."

"Deuced glad to unship," replied the old man.

This, however, was not the captain's game. The difficulty of procuring fresh hands in Calcutta is too well known to all who have traded to the port. It not being prudent, therefore, to punish him by turning him adrift, by which he would only inflict a loss upon himself, Captain Gall determined to make not only Bunce, but the entire crew, feel his resentment in another way—by stopping their liberty, not allowing one of the men to go on shore.

To accomplish this he had only to go before a magistrate, and make oath of his suspicion of their intention to desert; backed by Mr. Chutnee's interest, to whom he was consigned, there would be little difficulty.

With this resolution he retired to his cabin to dress, previous to going on shore.

"Saved for the present," murmured the lad.

The mate now came forward, and ordered the men to their duty. This was a command they could not lawfully refuse to obey, and consequently the old sailor and the poor, outraged boy were left together.

"Thank you," said the former.

"Thank me! for what?" demanded Bunce.

"Your kindness."

"Well, there may be something in that," replied the seaman, musingly, "as far as feelin' goes; but I wouldn't give a broken, moldy biscuit for the man who hadn't the pluck to stand up for his mate. Captains would never be tyrants if the crews only stuck by one another."

"I fear for you."

"For me!" exclaimed the former speaker, turning his quid, and giving his inexpressibles the true professional hitch. "Lord bless you, I ain't a-goin' to give the skipper no hold on me; it ain't for nothin' the crew christened me the sea-lawyer. I know my game. I only wish I could see yours as clearly; but those infernal 'dentures ain't left you a single p'int in the compass to steer your course by. How much longer have they to run, do you know?"

"About two years."

"Sorry for it."

"I shall be dead by that time," observed Caleb, with a sigh; "and, if it were not for my poor mother, I should scarcely regret it, but she has no one to look up to for protection but me."

"And yet she 'prenticed you to the skipper?"

"Not my mother, but her husband."

"Your father?"

"*My father-in-law*," replied the boy. "Every one thought him such an excellent man; people said when she married him that he would prove a father to her fatherless son."

Bunce gave an emphatic whistle; with his usual perspicacity, he began to see through the whole affair.

"*Money, I suppose*," *he observed.*

"*When I am of age.*"

"And if you die before?"

"It goes to my mother, and consequently to her husband," replied Caleb; "and now you know the reason why Captain Gall was selected for my skipper. I only wonder that he has not driven me to throw myself overboard long since. I have often thought of it."

"Never think of it again, then," exclaimed the old man; "not that a sailor ought to fear death when it is the will of Providence to call for him, for it's my belief the road to heaven from the bottom of the sea is quite as near as from the churchyard, and may be a shorter tack. I wish you were safely out of the clutches of our infernal skipper."

"I wish so, too."

"Jack escaped him," continued Bunce, musingly, "and why shouldn't you?"

"Jack had a friend."

"Providence may raise you up one. Take an old sailor's advice—never return home till you are one-and-twenty, what the land lawyers call being of age, and then you may overhaul the accounts of that shark of a father-in-law of yours in safety."

The eyes of Caleb sparkled at the thought.

"I must think," added the speaker. "I have unraveled many a tangled yarn in my time; but this is rather more knotted than usual. Howsomever, never despair."

"I will not."

"And no more thoughts about jumping overboard. Do you hear?"

Caleb promised that he would not.

"It would only be just what your enemy wishes," added his adviser; "and, above all, don't try it in the Hooghly. The crocodiles have ugly jaws, and are a deuced sight worse than the skipper."

Their conversation was broken up by the appearance of Captain Gall upon the deck of the Caradoc. He was dressed ready to go on shore. Calling to his mate, he directed him to get the boat ready.

It was lowered with alacrity, for not a man on board but felt delighted at the thought of his absence from the vessel, although it should last only for a few hours.

"Fraser," said the commander, as he stepped into it, "you will not allow any one to quit the ship."

The Scot touched his cap.

"Or to come on board."

"Not Mr. Chutnee, sir?"

"Of course, you may admit him," replied the captain. "Seeing that he is part owner, I don't very well see how to prevent it."

"Nor any of the dingiewallahs with vegetables and fruit?"

"I mean Europeans," said his superior, angrily, for he felt sure that Jack Manders could never have escaped and remained concealed so long in Calcutta, had he not contrived to interest some one of his countrymen in his favor.

The speaker had not quitted his ship more than half an hour before a boat, rowed by several natives, came alongside. It was filled with the choicest fruits, which a boy about sixteen years of age expressed himself anxious to barter.

"You no soda-bottles?" he shouted, holding up a basket of magnificent mangoes.

The mate shook his head.

"Me sell cheap."

"Got no money."

"But you got rum, old clothes, anything. Me have pretty things—shells, boxes for ladies, and dis for sahib."

The lad held up several of these carved articles, such as card and cigar-cases, work-boxes, inlaid with ivory, for which the native workmen are celebrated. The canny Scot, thinking he might procure a bargain, could not resist the temptation, but made signs to him to come on board.

In a second, the boy, who was no other than the sycee or groom of our hero, was upon deck, his goods spread out before him. As he sold remarkably cheap, the sailors bought freely. The mate felt anxious to purchase an elegant basket, the price of which was five rupees.

The agent of Richard had paid ten for it at the bazaar that very morning, and only an hour previously.

"Four," said the Scot.

"No, me must have five."

"Four is enough," exclaimed the mate, holding out the money, thinking the sight of it might tempt him.

"And you give me soda-water bottles?"

"I told you we had none."

"Old clothes, den?"

The mate recollected that he had an old jacket and trowsers in his cabin. The present appeared an excellent occasion for disposing of them to the best advantage. Telling the boy not to part with the article till his return, he left the deck to fetch them.

"You no buy something?" said the sycee, addressing Caleb, who stood leaning disconsolately against the mast, regarding the scene.

"I have no money," replied the lad, sorrowfully.

"I trust you."

"I have no friend to give them to," added Caleb, with a sigh, "even if I were to purchase them."

"No friend!"

"Not one."

"You forget Jack," whispered the lad, in excellent English.

Caleb started. The name brought the warm blood into his cheek, and caused his heart to beat with a feeling which had long been a stranger to it—hope. It seemed as if Providence at last had heard his prayer.

"Ah," continued the speaker, seeing by the glance of intelligence which passed between them, that he was understood, "you no money. Me like English sailor-man—good for me—me give you nut for notink."

Several of the men laughed and declared that it must be an empty one—in all their experience they had never known a native give anything before.

The boy laughed and shook his head.

"No, no!" he exclaimed; "nut very good *inside*; try it."

Caleb took the hint and darted with it down the cabin, just as the mate made his appearance upon the deck with the old clothes he had been to fetch. As a matter of course, he did not higgle long over his bargain, but accepted the four rupees and the jacket and trowsers for his basket.

"I should like to have the fellow to it," observed the Scot, examining it admiringly. "Have you got one?"

The boy added in the affirmative.

"Will you bring it?"

"For five rupees."

"Well," said the purchaser, "we won't quarrel about the price; come on board in the evening, and I'll see what I can do with you."

The agent of our hero returned to his boat, and might soon have been seen rowing rapidly away.

On reaching the forecastle, Caleb cracked the nut, and was not deceived in his expectations: for he found in it a note, not written by Jack, but purporting to come from him.

It ran thus—

"The gentleman who assisted me to escape from the Caradoc has heard how badly you are treated by the captain, and is anxious to rescue you. The person who will give you this may be trusted with your reply; have one ready against his next visit to the ship, and consult Bunce as to the means."

Tears dimmed the eyes of the lad several times as he perused it. There was something so unusual in any one taking an interest in his welfare, that it touched his heart.

His first care was to communicate its contents to the sea-lawyer.

"All right," said the sailor. "I knew that young fellow," alluding to our hero, "was a trump. Bless him, he deserves to be an admiral. We'll soon have you out of dock, and that is better than pitching yourself overboard, ain't it? Never doubt Providence again," he added; "she has an especial care for sailors. The difficulty will be to get you clear of the ship."

"I can swim," exclaimed the boy, eagerly.

"You forget the crocodiles," answered Bunce, drily. "Better not try a race with them. I remember once upon land to have seen a couple of hounds following a hare—coursing, I think they call it. It was curious to see how they doubled and turned upon their prey, till they ran it down at last; but, Lord bless you! their coursing was nothing compared with the crocodiles."

Caleb shuddered at the thoughts the words of the speaker suggested.

"That plan must be given up."

"I have it!" exclaimed the old man, suddenly. "The cargo is not all loaded yet. In the morning there will be several barrels of dry goods to land."

"Well."

"I will head you up in one of them, and, once on shore, you must trust to a clean pair of heels and the chapter of accidents for the rest."

"But where am I to go when on shore?"

"Providence will direct you."

"How find Jack?"

His adviser still made the same reply.

Caleb did not like the risk. The project might be plausible, but there was one danger attending it; once headed in the cask, it would be impossible for him to release himself without some assistance.

Bunce admitted the validity of the objection. "I have it!" he exclaimed. "What a couple of fools we are to be casting about for an anchor when we have three ready for use on the occasion."

"Three," repeated the young man.

The old sailor pointed to the ship's boats.

"The skipper," he said, "gives a spread to some of the landsmen to-morrow, and not one of the boats will be hauled on deck, the second mate will be ashore, and Fraser left in charge of the crew."

"I see."

"When all is quiet except the feasters in the cabin, slip down the side, and cut the rope."

"But the oars will not be in her."

"The tide will drift you," replied the seaman, in answer to the objection. "When did the Hindoo boy say he should be on board again?"

"The note says in the morning."

"Write an answer."

"Should it be found upon me?" urged Caleb.

"I'll take charge of it, and give it to him."

"Should it be found on you?"

"Well, they can't hang me for three words, though I once heard one of the land-lubbers say that a line of a man's handwriting might be twisted into a rope for his neck. Besides, they could never prove it to be my writing, seeing as I never larnt."

"But what am I to write?"

"'To-morrow night, twelve'—that will be sufficient," said Bunce. "The youngster who befriended Jack will understand; take my word for it, he will be upon the watch, and keep a sharp look-out."

The scheme was arranged accordingly; the words, as the speaker suggested, written upon the back of an old card, and carefully stowed away in the pocket of Bunce till the opportunity should arrive for using it.

In the course of the day Captain Gall returned on board the Caradoc, accompanied by a party of the Calcutta police, which the authorities had sent upon his representation of the mutinous spirit of his crew. One of the men was stationed at the gangway with strict orders to allow no one to descend or come on deck without the permission of the captain or the first mate.

The next morning the sycee again made his appearance. Fraser, who was waiting for him, called out that he should fasten the basket he had brought with him to the end of a line.

"You send me de money first."

The Scot shook his head. He had not intended to pay him for it in rupees, but in old clothes.

"Den me must see den," exclaimed the pretended fruit and curiosity dealer. "De last one very bad—very."

"There can't be much harm," thought the officer, "in letting him come aboard. The skipper is not stirring yet; he will never know it."

Having come to this conclusion he gave the order, and the messenger of Richard mounted the side of the vessel. He had the basket in one hand, and could only use the other to grasp the rope.

Bunce stepped forward to assist him, and the instant he stepped upon deck slid the card in his palm. The boy conveyed it to his girdle, unobserved.

The old sailor walked away.

Having accomplished the object of his visit, the pretended dealer did not higgle longer than was absolutely necessary in order to avoid suspicion, over the bargain; but, taking the clothes at a rupee less than the mate's valuation of them for his basket, he descended by the same means to his boat again, and quickly rowed out of sight.

One person only had recognized him—the officer of police on guard, who knew him to be the sycee, or groom, of the young Englishman who drove so frequently about the streets of Calcutta. With the cunning of an Asiatic he kept his knowledge of him to himself, thinking it would be time enough to use it if anything occurred, and a reward should be offered.

Your true oriental never does anything without a recompense.

The party, which consisted of Sanford and several of Mr. Chutnee's clerks, came on board at sunset to dine with the captain, and remained till a late hour.

Their host, at the conclusion of the evening, saw them to his boat.

"Police on deck!" observed the head clerk, as he was about to descend the gangway; "what's up, captain?"

"A mutinous spirit on board," replied the latter, "but I know how to lay it. They haven't got a child to deal with."

"Lay it in the Red Sea," hiccoughed one of his guests, "that is the place."

The witticism was rewarded with a laugh.

"You can't lay any spirits in the Hooghly," added the speaker. "I should like to see the spirit you talk of."

"That may be easily done," said the captain, at the same shouting for Caleb.

But no Caleb answered him, and the rage and disappointment of his persecutor may be better imagined than described, when he discovered that his victim had contrived to baffle his precautions and escape from the Caradoc.

As a matter of course, not one of the crew had the slightest idea how the lad had got away.

"Look to the boats!" roared the first mate.

It was soon found out that one was missing, and the curses of the commander became loud and fearful.

"Pshaw!" said Sanford, coolly. "Why make all this fuss for a mere boy; doubtless he has gone on shore for a spree."

"I'd give twenty rupees rather than lose him," replied his host savagely.

The officer of police pricked up his ears.

"Nay, thirty for the matter of that. He must have had some assistance from the shore. He is the second apprentice I have lost."

"Thirty rupees," said the policeman, "and you shall have him back."

"Do you know where he is?"

"No."

"What do you mean, then, by promising to bring him back?"

"I can find him; no one was ever lost in Calcutta."

"You may rely on what he says," observed Sanford. "There are no better bloodhounds in the east than our police. I feel rather curious to see how the affair will end. Speak out!" he added, addressing the man.

"And the money?"

"I will guarantee it."

The Hindoo shook his head.

"Pay him it," said the clerk, turning to the commander of the Caradoc. "If he fails in keeping his promise, I shall know how to recover it from him. The head of his office is my particular friend."

The money was counted to the man; for, avaricious as Captain Gall naturally was, the passion for gold was second only to revenge.

The policeman placed the rupees carefully in his girdle.

"Now speak!" exclaimed the gentleman.

"A boy came on board the Caradoc this morning, under pretence of selling an inlaid basket to the mate. He accepted a rupee, a few old ragged clothes, worth at the most two rupees more, for an article which must have cost ten, at least."

"The rascal!"

"Fool, I should say," observed the clerk.

"He was no dealer."

"How do you know that?" demanded the captain, eagerly.

"Because I have seen him for the last three months in the service of a wealthy young Englishman, who resides in Calcutta. The gentleman is a friend of Mr. Sanford's."

"And his name?" demanded the latter.

"Hirim."

"What, Tyrrell's groom?"

"The same."

"Whew!" whistled the confidential clerk of Mr. Chutnee; "this, then, explains the refusal of Tyrrell to join our party. If he has mixed himself in the affair, you had better give it up as a bad job," he added, addressing himself to the captain. "He has ingratiated himself with all the big wigs of Calcutta, visits at the government-house, is hand and glove with Sir Charles Fourreau, and dines with the judges. Your case must be clear indeed to succeed against him in a court of law."

Had he been less excited with wine, in all probability the commander of the Caradoc would have remembered that his case, as far as Jack was concerned, was anything but clear. Caleb was his apprentice; he held him fast, as far as writing and parchment could affect it, and he determined to proceed to the residence of our hero.

"I will see him at once," he exclaimed.

"What for?"

"To recover my apprentices; doubtless they are both there. If Mr. Tyrrell were the friend of all the authorities in India, he should not interfere between me and my crew. Will you accompany me?"

Sanford would fain have excused himself, for our hero was one of the few persons whom he did not like the idea of quarreling with, or take an active part against, not that he liked, but because he feared him.

At last, however, he permitted himself to be persuaded, and descending to the boat with the captain and the police officers, they rowed off together.

"Ill luck go with you," muttered Bunce. "What have the land-lubbers to do with it? But they never can let us sailors alone; they take as natterally to tormenting as a gul does to water. I'd rayther be put on the black list for six months, or drink three-water grog for the rest of the cruise," he added, emphatically, "than see either of the poor lads on board the Caradoc agin."

"Ye'll see Caleb again, at any rate," observed the mate, who overheard him. "There's no getting over his indentures."

"I don't believe he is 'dentured," replied the old man, sullenly.

"Ye are out of your reckoning there, maister sea-lawyer," said the young Scotchman, "for I saw them mysel' this verra mornin', when I took the ship's charter out o' the captain's desk; he wanted it to take on shore wi' him."

"Perhaps you are out of your reckoning," retorted Bunce.

"That's no' possible."

"Did you read them, then?"

"No occasion for that."

"How could you tell one paper from another if you did not?" demanded the sailor, with half-suppressed curiosity.

Our readers must recollect that with all his legal learning, of which he was not a little vain, the speaker could not read. His object in putting the question was to obtain such a description of the indentures as might enable him to distinguish them from any other document.

"They don't happen to be written on paper," answered the young Scotchman, proud of the opportunity of displaying his knowledge, "but upon parchment."

His hearer mentally repeated the word.

"And have three or four seals and signatures," added the mate.

The sea-lawyer indulged in a wink, a habit he had contracted when satisfied with himself.

It was not without reason that he felt so on the present occasion, for, to repeat his own graphic expression, "he had washed out the mate's scuppers most effectually," and obtained the information he required.

Everything seemed to favor his designs of obtaining possession of the deed which bound poor Caleb to his persecutor, for the steward, having no longer the two apprentices to assist him, requested the second officer to lend him one of the hands to help in clearing the captain's cabin.

"Take Bunce," answered the mate.

Bunce obeyed, trying to look as if he did not like the job. An hour afterwards the 'dentures, as he called them, were safe at the bottom of the Hooghly, tied with a piece of spun yarn round an old marline-spike.

"A bad skipper makes a bad crew," thought Bunce, as he quietly dropped them overboard. "It ain't *exactually* what I should call fair sailin'; but with a foul wind, and driven on a lee shore, a poor fellow is often obliged to get the weather gauge of his conscience, and tack as he can."

With this bit of mental philosophy, the old sailor descended the forecastle to turn in—his watch for the night being ended.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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TWICE MARRIED.

A WOMAN'S STORY.

BY HERSELF.

I remember, perhaps more vividly than any other moment of my life, the moment when I first stood, leaning on my husband's arm, and looking down through a sloping avenue, at the house which was to be my home, with him. We had not been three hours married—the carriage had left us at the gate, and we were all alone. It was a strange feeling, half joy and half sadness, that filled my heart, and he was very serious and very silent. It may be that he was thinking of another bride, as young and far more fair than I, who had once entered those gates with him, and had been carried out, years afterwards, in her coffin, with her children weeping around her. I was a little child then, playing merrily up in my Green Mountain home, perfectly unconscious of his existence, as he of mine—yet the years had come and gone, and I, in my dawning womanhood, and he, with his gray hairs, were then together—man and wife!

We stood in the balcony. The moon was up, shining full and clear above the sea, and leaving a path of light upon the quiet waters, that led far out beyond the harbor line. The ocean broke with a sullen roar, "like the wind through a forest of pines," on the other side of the beach, and we could see the lights of the city twinkling through the mist. It was a pretty scene. I drew near my husband, and laid my head upon his arm. He took me nearer, and murmured, with his lips upon my cheek—

"God has been very good to me, my darling. I little thought to see so happy an hour here. But the night air is damp, and you have no shawl. Come, let us go back to the house."

Life in the cottage home was beautiful beyond measure for a time. But at last there came a change. Something, I knew not what, in my husband's manner towards me—a kind of coldness and distrust that made me melancholy and lonely. I felt that I had done nothing to deserve the loss of his confidence, but I was too proud to ask its return. I used to steal away and think of it, by myself; but I never spoke to him, and he, in his turn, was silent. In the shadow that was lying between us, his son Alfred, (a boy of nineteen, two years my senior,) and his "familiar spirit," Richard Stanton, whose presence always filled me with dread, continually passed to and fro.

I sat, one evening, on the garden bench beside the sea, leaning my head on my hand, and thinking drearily what would become of me if I lost my husband's love, when a step sounded on the sand beside me, and Richard Stanton sat down, and picked up the book which had fallen from my lap.

"Upon my word, you are a most romantically disposed couple," he said, laughingly. "I peeped in at the cottage door, and seeing Mr. James busily poring over a miniature he held in his hand, beat a hasty retreat—and now I come upon you, composing a sonnet to the moon, I'll be bound—or an epic poem in honor of your wedding day, which, by the way, was just four months ago."

I paid little attention to the latter part of his speech, but asked, with a dangerous frankness—

"A miniature, did you say?"

"Yes. Yours, of course—though really I think were I as happy a man as he, I should never desert the original for any silent, lifeless copy."

"He has no picture of me," I said, impulsively. And a strange emotion of anger and jealousy began to rise in my heart.

"Are you sure?" asked Stanton, with a keen glance. "I saw him press it to his lips and heart——"

"Mr. Stanton, it is *not* my picture?"

"Is it possible," he said, under his breath, "that a man is living, who can give one thought to another while he possesses *you?*"

The blood came in my face at his look and manner. He leaned over me, and went on.

"You must be mistaken. It must be your own picture, which he has procured."

"Oh, I wish I knew!"

"Shall I find out, for you? *Dear* Mrs. James, I will do anything, everything, rather than see you so unhappy."

And at that moment, while my heart was beating and my cheek flushing at his words, my name seemed floating above us, in a grave, sad tone—"*Nina!*"

I looked up, and we both started; I, instinctively, and he, I think, deliberately, for my husband was standing on the balcony looking down at us.

"It is damp," he said, coldly. "Will you come in?"

I took the book which Stanton offered me, and we went up the steps together. He did not enter the house, but pressing my hand in both his, left me at the door and hurried away. This of itself was imprudent, but I did not think of it, till I entered the study, and saw the look on my husband's face.

"How long is it, Nina, since you have begun to hold clandestine interviews with this man?" he said, bitterly.

I could not try to conciliate him while a suspicion was gnawing at my own heart, and my answer was cold and curt.

"I have yet to learn that an interview which is entirely accidental, and which takes place in the open air, and before the very windows of my own home, *can* rightly be called a clandestine one, Mr. James."

He stamped his foot angrily.

"And you have yet to learn another thing, Nina—that *my* wife, like Cæsar's, must be above suspicion. Good heavens! I thought I was marrying a simple, artless child—and what have I found?"

"A woman who knows when her dignity is outraged; a woman who cares more, far more, for her husband's honor than he for hers."

I was going out of the room when he stopped me, pale with passion.

"Explain yourself, Nina."

"Let your own heart tell you what I mean."

"Do you doubt my honor?"

I was silent.

"Has it come to this already?" he exclaimed, wildly. "They told me so; they warned me of what I must expect; but I would not believe them. Now I find it is all too true. Oh fool that I have been! To think of my being cast aside for that man!"

I rose to my feet, and looked at him steadily.

"It is my turn now to ask for an explanation, and a separation also, Mr. James. Whom do you mean?"

"Don't add hypocrisy to all your other faults, Nina. Who should I mean but Richard Stanton?"

"And do you dare say what you have said, with reference to him?" I asked, with a kindling glance.

He looked disgusted.

"To spare you any further deceit, I may as well tell you that I am in possession of all your letters to him. Some time ago I was warned, and I have been watching you closely ever since. To-day those letters were sent to me by some unknown hand. You only anticipated my own wish when you so passionately demanded an explanation and a separation, Nina. Let it be when you will, for I am sick of life—and of you! You are full of deceit, and the truth is not in you!"

I burned from head to foot, with rage.

"Coward! If I was not a woman, you would not dare tell me that!"

Blinded and maddened by fury and jealousy, *he struck me.* The blow fell upon my breast, and everything grew dark around me.

When I opened my eyes again, I was lying on the sofa, in my own room, and he was bending over me, with a glass of water in his hand. I turned away, with a feeling of deadly anger and loathing, and he fell at my feet in an instant.

"Oh, Nina, forgive me. I did not know what I was doing. Only say that you forgive me, and all that has passed shall be forgotten."

I rose up and spurned him from me.

"I said truly that you were a coward. Now leave me."

"Forgive me first."

"Never—though they lay me in my grave. The man that can strike a woman because she resents a deep insult, has no need of forgiveness. Will you leave me, or shall I go?"

He rose to his feet.

"At least tell me if you are going, Nina."

"Yes."

"Delay it—think of it but one day—for my sake."

"Not one moment."

By ten o'clock that morning my trunks were packed. I looked out of the window—the last look at the place I had loved so well. My husband stood by the sea-wall, as I passed out of the house; but seeing me with my usual dress and garden hat on, did not speak, or oppose my departure. I closed the gate behind me, as I believed, for the last time, and hurried up the street. It was my intention to wound and disgrace him as deeply as I could, by finding out Richard Stanton, asking his advice and placing myself under his protection. But a merciful Providence frustrated this mad design, and led me that day in the way of a friend I had not seen for months. She had known me before my marriage, and when I related what had happened on the previous evening she was as pained and indignant as I could have expected her to be.

"It is ill meddling in such matters," she said, gravely, "but here I cannot help it. Anything is better than that you should lose your reputation

forever by going to that man. Come home with me. I have no daughters, but if you like, you shall be as a child to me. Send to your husband for nothing. Go with me, as you are, to the station, and half an hour's ride will take us to the city, which is my present home. You will be safe at least with me; and I can perhaps bring about an understanding between you, after the pain of this has gone away."

"I will go with you," I said, clinging to her like a child. "But oh, take me where I never shall look upon his face again."

"For a time, at least," she answered. And that night I slept in her house, in one of the shadiest and most quiet streets of Boston.

Two months passed by, and in all that time, my husband and I had never met nor exchanged a letter.

I was looking idly from the carriage window one day, as it passed slowly along the crowded promenade of Washington street, when a beautiful engraving in a shop window attracted my attention. I pulled the check string, got out, and entered the shop. I had selected that and two other pictures, and was returning to the carriage, when the passage of four police officers, leading three drunken prisoners to the station house, forced me back to the door. I was meditating on the best means of escape through the rabble that followed, when a gentleman, standing near me, touched his hat, and said:

"If you will allow me, I will see you safely to your carriage, madam." My vail was down, and I could not see his face. But when, through his courtesy, I was safely sitting in the carriage, I raised it, and bent forward to thank him. Our eyes met—it was my husband!

By his start of surprise I saw that he had not known me before. He looked so changed—so pale—and his hair, which had been gray before, was now as white as snow. He leaned upon the carriage window, trembling like a leaf, and said in a low voice:

"My little Nina!"

The pet-name and the pleading tone would have been too much for me, if I had not thought of the blow he had given me. That steeled me.

"Will you be kind enough to accept my thanks for your services, Mr. James," I said, coldly, "and tell the coachman to drive on?"

"You have not forgiven me, then? you will take no pity on me—you will not think of my blighted and lonely life?"

I made a movement of impatience.

"Well, I will not detain you. But for your own sake, dear child, forgive me before you die!"

He bowed, and the carriage drove towards home. I was in a passion of tears when I reached the house, and ran up th stairs at once to "my mother's" room. She looked shocked and surprised when I came and flung myself down at her feet.

"My dear Nina, what is the matter?"

"Oh, take me somewhere where I can never see him again. I have just met him, and my heart is breaking."

She looked serious, and thought a moment.

"Do you ever wish to go back to him?"

"Oh, no."

"And you do not care how great a distance lies between you?"

"The greater the better, mother."

"Then we will go to Europe."

I looked up delightedly.

"Are you in earnest, mother?"

"Certainly. And I should have proposed the journey to you some time ago, only that I had an idea—as I must confess I have now—that you would return to him."

"Dismiss it, mother. I never shall."

The ship was a noble one, and sailed over the deep waters like a bird. She had not a bird's unerring instinct of flight, however, and but obeyed the human hand that guided her. So it happened that we went ashore in the English Channel one dark, tempestuous night, and out of all that gay company only three, besides myself, were saved—my mother, the captain's wife, and a common sailor, who, at the risk of his own life, swam with us through the rough waters to the main land. It was a noble deed! May he rest well where he is sleeping now in the old Kentish churchyard.

The tidings of that loss went home, like this: "and all on board perished." It was long before we knew it, and when at last I discovered it, I persuaded my mother that, as the captain's wife and our brave preserver were both dead, it was not necessary to divulge the truth. I, in good truth, *was dead* to all who had known me in my native land. And she consented, at last, that it should be as I wished.

Our new home was in the quiet German city of Bremen. We spent four years there, hearing but little of our friends beyond the sea. At last, in looking over an American paper, I came upon my husband's marriage! He had thought me dead, and had given my name and place to another. What was to be done? The lapse of time had softened me a little, and I began to think of him more kindly. But now that my silence had caused him to commit this terrible blunder, would it not be better to make myself an exile forever, rather than bring shame and sorrow to one who was conscious of no crime in loving me? I consulted with my mother, and it was her decision that we should stay.

Not long, however, could I say "we." Before the linden trees had shed their leaves that summer, she was lying in her grave, and I was left alone, and feeling like an orphan, although I was not really one, among those odd, kind people.

But those little children—those fair young maidens—those kind mothers, and those pleasant homes, did what nothing else had been able to do—and made me long for mine. The rustic cottage by the sea rose up before me, while I sat in the tea gardens and watched the crowds around me; and I felt a strange curiosity to see how the new wife looked in my old abode. For a year I drove away the thought of return, for I dreaded the ocean voyage, and I knew no welcome awaited me, when it was finished. But there is a foolish chord in every heart that throbs and tingles at the thought of home, and in the second summer after my mother's death I was upon the sea once more.

It was the sweetest of all times—the Indian summer—when, after a long and aimless journey through the western and southern States, I turned my course towards New England. I had been loitering here and there—dreading the time when I must go back to the old place, and yet longing for it, till the day fixed for my return was near at hand, and I had no more excuse for delay. I stopped in New York, and with the aid of a skillful hair-dresser and costumer, transformed myself into a woman apparently sixty years old. It was my intention to assume the name and character of my dead friend, if any suspicions were awakened in my husband's mind. I knew she, were she living, would pardon the act; and as he had never met her, my plan of operation was most simple. Just to look upon his face for the last time—to say that Nina sent him her forgiveness with her dying breath—that was all!

It was dusk when I arrived in the city of ——. My servant, who had already engaged rooms at one of the large hotels, met me at the depot, and dispatched my trunk by one of the porters, while he conducted me to a close hackney-coach which was in waiting. He was a faithful fellow, and I had confided to some extent in him, so that my altered appearance did not impress him so forcibly as to draw the attention of the bystanders to me. But he looked puzzled enough, as he mounted the box and drove away, to have made me laugh, if my heart had not been so full.

It was not many moments before the carriage stopped before the well-known gate, and, trembling in every limb, I opened it, and walked down the avenue. A neatly-dressed servant admitted me into the little parlor, and went to call her mistress. The room was greatly changed—filled with a profusion of showy knick-knacks, that looked strangely out of place.

The servant came back.

"Would you be kind enough to step in the boudoir?"

I followed her through the study, which was quite unaltered, into a small room which had been built out from the balcony, and furnished gaudily, like a bazaar. A stout, middle-aged lady, with black eyes and hair, and a face somewhat flushed, was sitting in an easy chair beside the table, busy with some useless piece of fancy work. She half rose from her seat as I came in, and then sank back, saying, in a drawling voice—

"Pray be seated, madam. You will excuse me, but I am an invalid, and not able to receive you, except here."

She looked little like one. And I looked at her earnestly, entirely at a loss to imagine what had been the tie that bound her to my husband.

"I beg your pardon for intruding upon you," I said, nervously. "I wished to see Mr. James."

"Oh!"

There was so much significance in the monosyllable that I hastened to explain.

"It is rather an awkward business—yet I should wish you to know it. His second wife——"

She nestled uneasily in her chair.

"Dear me! what about her? He is silly enough about her now. I hope you are not going to say anything to make him more so."

"How do you mean?"

"I don't mind telling you," she said, with a coarse frankness that repelled, though she meant it should win, me, "that my match with Mr. James was a made-up one, if you know what that means. My half brother, Richard Stanton——"

"Is he your brother?" I exclaimed, quite thrown off my guard.

"Yes—do you know him?" she asked, with a keen glance.

"I have heard Nina speak of him."

"Yes—there was some trouble with him and Mr. James about both wives, I believe. The first one was engaged to Richard, when he was a college student, and afterwards married Mr. James."

A new light broke in upon my mind. Here was a motive for any revenge he might have chosen to take, and with him a motive would have been equivalent to, or synonymous with, a deed.

"I never rightly knew about the second," she went on. "But after my brother and Mr. James became good friends, Richard was very anxious I should marry him, and I did. But I found this 'Nina,' as you call her, forever in my way. There was a picture, or a book, or a statue which had been hers, and which must, on no account, be touched or looked at. As for her boat," she added, with a jolly laugh, "I am sure, I was the last person to suggest any alterations in that, and Alfred and his father have it sealed up somewhere from the light and air, I believe. Very ridiculous at my husband's time of life, I can assure you, my dear madam. When he insisted upon the baby's being called Nina, we came very near quarreling. However, I let him have his way, and he has been more quiet ever since."

A door opened and shut behind me, and she looked up.

"Ah, there is Mr. James."

I turned and saw him in the study, looking towards me. He was an old man now, in look and motion as well as years, and I knew only too well what grief had worked the sad change. But in his arms sat a little fair-haired child, whose face was a faithful copy of his own, as I had first known him; the same regular features, the same sweet smile, and melancholy eyes. I gasped for breath, and the hot tears sprang to my eyes. For the sake of that pretty infant I could not disclose my secret—I could not bring shame upon that bright head; and yet, never in my whole life had I loved him so tenderly—never had I so longed to throw myself at his feet, and acknowledge all. I thought my heart would break and I should die, as I closed the door of the boudoir behind me and went up to him.

"You wished to see me," he said, in a hesitating kind of way, and looked at me so earnestly that I feared my gray hair, and altered face, and widow's weeds were but a poor disguise.

"Yes."

"Will you take a seat?"

"No, I prefer standing. I have only a few words to say to you, but they are from one you ever loved better than life."

The color forsook his lip and cheek.

"From Nina?"

"Yes."

He sat down and buried his face a moment in the soft curls of the child's hair. When he lifted it, it was wet with tears.

"Well—tell me."

"You know she is dead?"

"I know it, and yet I can hardly realize that the bright, happy creature has gone. To me, she can never be dead."

"Yet you will never meet her again, till, if God wills it, you meet in heaven," I said, with a trembling voice. "And I come to bring you her last words."

"Who *are* you?" he asked, turning towards me, and fixing his eyes full upon me.

"One whom Nina loved. Let that content you. She forgave you from the bottom of her heart. She charged me, if I lived, to seek you out and tell you so, and to receive that forgiveness, on my knees, for her, which she could not obtain herself. You will not refuse it?"

I knelt before him, and, trembling and weeping like a child, he laid his hand on mine.

"Woman, there was nothing to forgive. The letters were forged."

My heart leaped even then.

"But for her sake," I pleaded.

"For her sake, then, I say, Nina, I forgive you! And you must speak those words for her, or I shall not be at rest."

"My husband, I forgive you," I murmured, with such tears that I thought he must know me. But God was merciful!

I rose from my knees when I grew calm.

I went out through the familiar rooms with him once more, and he never dreamed that the living Nina was walking by his side. We parted at the door, but when I looked back as I shut the gate, he was standing on the steps of the portico, gazing earnestly after me, and holding up the child, whose little arms were stretched out, as if she would call me back. I sprang into the carriage, and waved him a last farewell, as it rolled away.

He dwells there yet with his wife and child, waiting for the hour that will set him free; and I, in a foreign land, am alone, waiting too!

FAITH.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

Faith, thou art a rock on which we build
Our future Home;
What though tempestuous storms against thee beat,
With fury wild—yet may our weary feet
A refuge find in thee,
The portals of a bright Eternity
Are thine alone.

From thy fair summit, crowned with peace, we see
Light shining on our way;
And far beyond Life's troubled, restless tide,
We mark a sure, safe path through which to guide
Our weak and trembling bark,
What though our night is dark!
We know 'twill soon be day.

Steadfast we'll cling to thee—foundation sure;
Though palaces are raised upon the sand,
They are but earthly—can they stand the blast
Of the rude gale when madly rushing past?
Ah, no!—Sure shelter 's only found in thee;
We know beyond the turmoil of the sea,
Is the fair promised land.

UNCLE FRANK'S DESK;

OR,

THE SECRETED WILL.

BY CORA BELL.

"Alice, my beloved, do not leave me to die alone. Alice! Alice! come to me," was uttered in the most plaintive accents of human misery.

It was a small garret room, in one of the most crowded and neglected alleys of Manchester. Poverty—that dire poverty that bows down the loftiest spirit, and leaves the soul crushed and paralyzed by its depressing influence—was there. The grate fireless, though in the depth of an inclement winter; the black, decayed boards, the cold, damp walls, from which the moisture hung in heavy drops; not even the few sordid articles of furniture visible, which are usually seen in the dwellings of the very poor, for everything had been parted with to sustain the afflicted occupants of that miserable chamber.

Such was the home of a Manchester operative—a man yet in the early summer of life, but who had toiled from childhood upwards for a subsistence, and who now, stricken with typhus fever, contracted in his overcrowded, ill-ventilated abode, had nothing but the miserable parish dole to sustain him.

Stretched on the pallet from which the corpses of his two children had been taken the previous week, for weary days and nights the strong man had vented the anguish of a broken heart in the wild ravings of delirium, yet still he lived on. His wife—his tender, loving wife—was even denied the solace of sitting by him to wet his parched lips, or support his fainting head on her fond bosom. Through the weary hours of the day he was left to solitude and neglect, for the poor woman worked at the factory, and without the pittance her daily exertions procured, they would be unable to sustain their miserable existence.

It was not yet evening, though all was darkness in the room; for light, blessed light, that God sends down untaxed to the poor, was doled out to these wretched dwellings in modicums that barely enabled one to discern objects in the noonday. A sickly gleam of white, though, came from the narrow dormer window formed by the piled-up snow upon the opposite roofs, which drifted into fantastic shapes, looked like ghosts peering into that abode of sorrow.

The house was crowded, and the thin walls echoed with the sounds of coarse, brutal voices, mingled with oaths and drunken imprecations, but audible over all was the ceaseless, monotonous beating of the sleet against the shattered casement, and the fitful blasts of wind, as it swept along the chimnies.

"Alice, Alice," that deep, hollow voice had uttered more and more feebly, and yet she came not; but the latch was at last raised, and "Dear Frank, I will be with you now," was softly said. A light was struck, and a faded, fragile form bent in trembling anxiety over the bed.

"Oh, Alice," said the man, attempting to raise himself from the pillow, "I thought you would never come. I am dying. Have you got anything to give me—one drop of wine, beer, tea, anything that would take this cold, terrible sinking from my heart."

The girl—for though thin and careworn, she was very young—looked at him a moment in silent, speechless anguish, then, wringing her hands, she said, wildly—"Nothing, nothing—I could get nothing. The factory clerk said I was late these two days, and he would not give me even a shilling, and Mr. Seris is gone out of town."

"God help us," gasped the man, faintly. "Oh, Alice, if I could only die soon, you might go back to service, away from this horrid place. When I called out for you, Alice, I thought I was going; alone in this dark room so long, something heavy seemed pressing down my brain, and twice I felt an icy hand grasp my heart."

The young wife wept in agony, while she murmured distractedly, "Oh, Frank, you are dying for want of nourishment. The doctor told me you would recover if you got that, now that the fever is gone. Oh, he knew well enough I could get nothing out of the parish allowance; since my poor babe's death, they have reduced even that."

"Our case is no new thing to him," said the man; "it is one of thousands. Look at all that were struck down with the fever when he came here last year. He told me that there was one dead in every room, and now——"

The wife shuddered and hid her face in her hands. She had paid her tax to the King of Terrors, but what if this sole beloved one was taken from her, too.

"Oh, I am selfish, Alice; see how wet you are, my poor girl, and you have no fire."

"Yes—there is a little wood left; I will kindle it now," and the patient creature shook the sleet off her faded shawl, and mechanically wrung the moisture from her auburn hair.

In a few moments a scanty wood fire sent forth a transitory glow. She had hardly done, when a faint tap was heard at the door. Alice opened it, and a tiny child's form could be descried in the dim light.

"Is that Patty?" said the woman.

"Yes—it's only me," murmured a faint, timid voice. "I have brought you a little milk for Mr. Trevor."

"God bless you," was the tearful response, as the child's slender form glided back into the darkness.

"Poor little Patty; did I say I was alone all day?" said the sick man. "That sweet child sat by me a long time, and gave me water when I was nigh fainting. She wanted to light the fire, but I knew it would go out again, and I was afraid to keep her, lest the old man would beat her."

"He is sick, and has not gone out with the organ these two days," said the wife. "Ah, he's a bad man to treat that dear child so savagely."

"Yes, Alice, I'm glad our children are gone. Cold, hunger and oppression is the only lot of the poor man's child. Oh, that I had left this country when I was strong," murmured the man, in bitter, desponding tones. "From the cradle to the grave, the worker is ground down to a bondage more unremitting than the beasts of burthen, and when old age or sickness falls on him, he must die or go to the parish."

Alice had warmed the milk, the compassionate gift of that oppressed child, and now held it to her husband's lips. But the poor fellow pushed it feebly aside, saying—

"Take some of it first, Alice, you are cold and wet."

"No, Frank, I'm strong. I never feel pain or suffering only for you." The poor wife watched him with anxious tenderness, as, between gasps of weakness that almost impeded his breath, he drank the liquid off. A sigh of anguish escaped her. She had no food for him, and could he endure the night without it? Oh, she had toiled during the long, weary hours, when her tortured spirit had longed to be with that beloved husband, and after all she could not procure him a morsel of food. She had even stooped to sue for charity, and had been refused.

We have said that the apartment was destitute of furniture, but the flickering candle now revealed a small desk of foreign wood, curiously carved in the Indian style, which lay on an old ricketty table beneath the window. To this desk the girl's eyes wandered continually, sometimes with an abstracted gaze, that had no speculation in it, at others with an eager, hasty glance, as if suddenly struck with some idea connected with it.

The sufferer had fallen into a kind of doze. He opened his eyes, and extending his wasted hand, said—

"Sit beside me, Alice. Come closer, for this icy, shuddering weakness seems to leave me when you are near."

The girl crept into the bed, and passed her hand caressingly over her husband's forehead, parting the damp, heavy hair which lay in disordered masses upon it. A sickly smile played over his pallid features, and he gazed with unutterable tenderness upon the pale, sad face before him.

"Dear Frank," said she at length, in a hesitating tone, "would you let me sell the old desk? The man that bought the chairs offered me a pound for it."

A shade of vexation momentarily swept across the sick man's face.

"Ah, Alice, did I not before say that I would rather die of hunger than part with my poor old uncle's gift. In all my poverty I have kept that."

"But, Frank, this is for my life," said the girl calmly. "I'm too faint and weak to work to-morrow without getting some food. Uncle would have been glad that anything he had was of use to you."

"Oh, my poor wife, you are weak and faint," cried the man, "and I'm so selfish, I only think of myself. Take it, take it, Alice, dear. Why should we keep it? Strangers will have it when we are gone."

She did not wait for him to recall the words, *but with a wild eagerness that was painful to witness,* left the room.

In a few minutes she returned, accompanied by a man with a coarse apron and a paper cap.

"How are you since, poor fellow?" said he, approaching the bed, and speaking in rough but kindly accents.

"Poorly, sir, poorly; always longing for a breath of the pure air."

"I reckon these ere old houses come a little too close to the window, to give it much chance to get at you," said the man. "Ah, it's hard not to give the poor light and fresh air. But keep good heart, friend; it won't be always so."

He counted the money into Alice's hand, and shouldered the desk, after which poor Frank sent a glance of ill-dissembled anguish.

With the rapidity that only loving hands can effect, the decayed embers of the fire were brightened up, and a bit of white bread and a glass of warm wine were held by the tender wife to the trembling lips of her husband, who partook of the unwonted refreshment with a devouring eagerness that plainly revealed he was indeed perishing for lack of subsistence.

"Oh, that is so good!" murmured the invalid, sinking back upon the pillow with a sigh of relief. "But, Alice," said he, in accents of tender reproach, "it was me, not yourself, you thought of. Oh! let me see you before my eyes, drink some of that wine; it's done me good already."

The girl smiled sadly. She poured a small quantity of the wine into a cup, and drank it off.

"Tell me, are you angry with me, Frank, about the desk?"

"No, my poor child; why should I be angry with you? It's you have reason to hate me, for I brought you out of comfort into all this misery; but God knows how hard I've worked, both late and early, to make a home for you. I'm glad uncle is not alive to see us in this strait, now."

"Wasn't he killed, Frank?" inquired the wife.

"Yes, Alice." He was silent—then spoke after a pause—

"Long years of misery and sorrow have passed since then; yet it seems but as yesterday since my dear uncle came into our place with that old desk. He was, as I told you, my mother's only brother; he had gone to sea when she was a little child, but he loved her dearly, and after years of travel in foreign climes, he came back to find all dead in the old home in his native village. He heard that my mother had married a weaver here in Manchester, and he came and found her out. My father (oh, God grant there be none like me, who can repeat the sacred name of father without one emotion of tenderness or respect to hallow its memory), was idle, savage, and intemperate, and treated my poor, patient mother like a brute. Before my uncle came, she worked all day long at the factory, so that household duties were neglected, which irritated him a good deal, though they were not neglected either; for I have often known mother to sit up, after a hard day's work, for several nights together, washing and mending our clothes, for I had four brothers and sisters, who, poor things, all fell victims to being forced to work too young. Oh! the innumerable sufferings of my childhood, at that time, crowd upon my mind, and almost overpower it."

"Do not tell me any more, Frank; you will lose the little strength you have gained."

"I've been silent all day, Alice; it will do me no harm," continued the young man. "I remember well how my young sisters used to cry when father roused them at the first sound of the factory bell, and drove them out shivering of a dismal winter's morning, when it was as black as midnight. And after all, the united earnings of us young ones would sometimes only amount to a few shillings. But cold, hunger, and protracted labor gradually killed them all, and I was left alone.

"When my uncle came all was changed for the better. He paid well and regularly for his board, on condition that mother should go no more to work. This pleased my father well enough, for it increased his comforts, and self was all he cared for. I was called after uncle, and to him I owe the little I know. He taught me to read and cipher, brought me with him to church, and on Sabbath evenings I used to sit beside him at that old desk, copying from memory the text and such portions of the morning's sermon as I could remember, all of which Uncle Frank carefully sewed in a book and kept by him. Home was something like a home then. But my poor mother died—then my uncle offered father to take me away with him and provide for me; but he did not want to lose the old man, for he suspected he had money; so he raged and swore that I should never go with him. Uncle never spoke another word on the subject, but he looked paler and sadder than he used. Dear old man, he used to tell me unceasingly of the wonders of the New World, and of the noble homes that lay awaiting the hand of industry in the Far West. He made me promise to go to America when I was a man. Oh, how I've longed all my life to collect the means to do so. Uncle was fond of being on the quays; one day, a load of timber from a wagon fell on him, crushing him fearfully. He only spoke a few words before he died, and these were—

"'My old desk—Frank——'

"Father hastened to it, hoping that it contained a lot of treasure; but when he found only a few tracts and a small package of money neatly labeled, 'For my burial,' he raged and cursed, and would have broken it up but I implored him not.

"Latterly I had been at school, but the day after uncle's death I was sent apprentice to the weaving. Since then, dear Alice, you know my fate."

They slept after a day of sickness, toil, and misery—that wretched pair—wretched despite of the riches of mutual love and tenderness glowing in their hearts.

Alice had risen early, and was giving her husband a cup of tea, preparatory to leaving him for the day, when the door was abruptly opened, and the cabinet-maker who had bought the desk entered the room with a paper in his hand.

"Are you Frank Trevor, of Comfield?" said he.

"Yes, sir," said the sick man, in somewhat agitated tones, while the poor wife started forward and gazed at the man with nervous terror, fearful that he had repented of his bargain, and was going to return the desk.

"Then I think if this is right," said the man, holding up what appeared a sealed parchment, "I've good news for you. I was putting a new back in that ere old desk when I spied a false panel—I slipped in my hand, and found this. It was hidden right cute."

"What is it?" said Frank, anxiously.

"A will leaving you five hundred pounds ($2,500.) It's dated ten years back; but if the money's right, that's nothing."

That moment the doctor entered the room.

"What's the matter?" said he, glancing at the excited faces of the party.

"This, sir," said Frank, handing him the paper. "Tell me what it means, though I think I can see all now. My dear uncle left me this. He denied himself the pleasure of a home to be with me to the last."

"It means, my man," said the doctor, gaily, "that you must get well as fast as you can now. You are heir to five hundred pounds, and which, by the date of this paper, must have accumulated to something more. The copy of this is lodged with respectable solicitors in London, who, I doubt not, have advertized for you. I will write for you to them to-day, so make yourself easy, my good fellow."

The offer of some money to supply needful comforts was gladly accepted by Alice, who now recognized a superintending providence in the physician's previous indifference.

The following week a letter arrived from the solicitors, saying that they had drawn up such a will at the time mentioned, and had since made every inquiry both for it and the heir, but could not succeed in their search. They would send a business man to investigate.

All proved satisfactory, and the money was paid. Joy cures rapidly. Frank Trevor rose from his bed with a heart throbbing with gratitude and delight. The beloved desk was recovered unmutilated; and Patty, the little organ girl, whose savage father had died, was taken to the arms of the grateful pair. In a few weeks the little party bade an eternal adieu to the stifling air of Manchester, and embarked for America. In the fertile and beautiful West, the gift of patient, self-denying Uncle Frank enabled them to purchase land and a pleasant home. Here they reared a happy family, the youngest member of which was taught to look with love and reverence upon Uncle Frank's Desk.

A MYSTERY UNVAILED.

"After looking through green spectacles for some time, white paper appears red; and after looking through red spectacles white paper appears green." There are only three original colours in nature—blue, red, and yellow. All the rest are compounds; white is a mixture of all. Now, in looking long at the red, the eye becomes tired; so that when the white, which contains all the three, is presented to it, it abstracts or overlooks the red; and the blue and yellow alone being left, the paper appears green; for blue and yellow make green. So after looking through green, it abstracts the blue and yellow (or green) from the paper, and red is left. On the same principle, if you look through yellow spectacles, the white will afterwards appear purple; for blue and red, the complement of the yellow, make purple. After looking through blue spectacles, the white appears orange, or red and yellow, and so on. This is a law of nature, which leads to a knowledge of harmony in colors; blue makes the finest contrast to orange, and red to green.

I WILL.

We like that strong, robust expression. No one having uttered it in sincerity, was ever a mean cringing man. The pigmies of the world did not trouble him, though they rose in masses to pull him down. He speaks and the indomitable will prevails. His enemies fall before him. He rides forth a conqueror. Would you then be great? Would you be distinguished for your scientific or literary attainments?—"I will" breathing from your lips, and bursting from a great heart, you cannot but prevail. Show me the man who never rose higher than a toad-stool, and whose influence died with his breath, and we will point you to a groping, cringing wretch, who trembled at the approach of a spider and fainted beneath a thunder-cloud. Let the fires of energy play through your veins, and if your thoughts are directed in right channels, you will startle the slumbering universe.

THE BREEZE OF MAY.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Breeze of the blessed May! thou com'st with flowers
And gentle winds upon our waiting world,
Like a rest spirit looking long and long
For something it would love.

Breeze of the May!
Is there not something here to love?

Sweep o'er the massive forehead of the one
Who holds an empire on his brooding brow:
Kiss the dear lips of him who sung for me
In music sweet as autumn winds that swoon
O'er a dead rose, the pale dead mariner;
Touch the young mother as she gently lies
On her pained couch—breathe to her helping word
Of love, and all the wondrous things that were
Breathed in lost Paradise.

Oh, thou gentle Breeze!
There are some other things that I might ask
Thy lute-like voice to sing—but that great God
Who gave thee thus thy soul-entrancing sound,
So like the stir of some sad angel's wings
Amid the faded bowers of a wrecked Paradise,
Will lead thee on in thy blest mission here.

Ah, Breeze! why did I dare to speak to thee?

AUNT SARAH'S STRATAGEM.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Mrs. Olive Burchard was a widow, a little past the prime of life, but still blooming and sound-minded. She had but one child—a son—whose name was Nathan, and who had reached the age of five-and-twenty, without having fairly bargained away his heart. He may have *lost* that part of himself several times, but he had always managed to gain it again ere any serious damage had been done. He was a fine, intelligent-looking young man, with an active brain, and nervous temperament, and rather prone to have his own way. People said he was odd—"an odd genius," some pronounced him—and "a queer fellow," others. A poor man might have been called stubborn and willful, but Nathan Burchard was wealthy, and people were generous.

Nathan laid down his paper and went out, leaving his mother alone. In a little while the outer door was opened, and Mrs. Burchard was soon made glad by the appearance of her sister Sarah. Sarah was her only sister, and, though a few years the oldest, still unmarried. But Sarah Lowell was not an old maid from necessity. The man she had loved, as such women can love but once, died ere the nuptial knot was tied, and she had never loved since.

The two sisters were soon engaged in a pleasant conversation, and when they had related all the items of news that seemed to be of importance, Aunt Sarah remarked:

"I have been to see Mrs. Montgomery this forenoon."

"Is Ellen at home?" asked Mrs. Burchard.

"Yes; and it is of her that I wish particularly to speak," resumed the other. "I saw her, and I saw enough to convince me that she is not so happy as she ought to be. She is a noble-hearted, generous, virtuous girl; and a prettier does not live in this town."

"You speak truly," said the widow, in a tone which bore a slight tinge of trouble.

"And a warmer friend and more devoted companion cannot be found," pursued Aunt Sarah.

"I believe you," was the reply.

"Then why has Nathan left her?"

The widow shook her head, and said she didn't know.

"But he has left her, hasn't he?"

"*I fear he has.*"

"You *fear?* Then you had no hand in breaking off the intimacy?"

"Me? Ah—indeed I did not, Sarah. I would rather own Ellen Montgomery for my daughter-in-law than any other girl I know. I think I can truly say, that nothing else could make me so happy at this moment as to have Nathan come and ask me if he could take her hand."

"Then why has he left her?" queried Sarah. "I am sure he once loved her; and I *know* that she loved him, and loves him now. Is it possible that he has allowed his thoughts to turn upon Sylvia Patten?"

"I will tell you how I think the matter stands," returned Mrs. Burchard. "Nathan has allowed himself to be influenced by the few fashionable friends with whom he associates, and his own convictions of right have given way before their sophistry and blandishments. And then another thing may have helped operate to this end: you know he had a particular aversion to being governed by the ideas or plans of others. It is a quality of mind that he inherits from his father, and it governs him more than is for his good. He knows that people have looked upon his marriage with Ellen as a fixed fact, and I think he means to disappoint them."

"Do you think he loves Sylvia Patten?" asked Aunt Sarah.

"He cannot love her as a wife should be loved," replied the widow, very confidently; "for she has none of those qualities of mind which can fix the true devotion of such a soul as I feel assured my son possesses. She is brilliant, and witty; and belongs to a wealthy family; and moves in a select circle; but I am very certain that she has no such heart as a wife should have."

"And what does Nathan say about it?"

"He has said nothing directly to me. Others have told me, however, of his sayings, so that I know very nearly what his present plans are. He looks upon his intimacy with Ellen Montgomery as a sort of schoolmate friendship, and he will not marry her because everybody has been planning that he should do so. He feels as though the match would not be of his own making, so he will not have it."

"Then you think he really loves Ellen?"

"I am sure he does; but has allowed this foolish whim to turn him from her."

"And do you imagine that he seriously thinks of offering his hand and fortune to Sylvia Patten?"

"I fear, every day, that he will make an announcement to me to that effect. I know that he has spoken of it to others."

"But haven't you said anything to him on the subject?"

"No. I know not what to say. I know his disposition so well that I fear any advice from me would make matters worse. A better son never lived, but on this one point he is beyond my control."

"I must ask one question more. Do you think he has any objection to Ellen on account of her poverty?"

"Not in the least. He is above that, so far as his own feelings are concerned."

"Well," resumed Aunt Sarah, after pondering a few moments, "my opinion in this matter is confirmed; and now if you will help me, I think we may turn Nathan back upon the right track. I am satisfied of two things: First, Ellen Montgomery loves him devotedly, and has been led to that love by his own attentions to her. And second, he loves her, and would be happier in a home of which she was mistress than in any other."

"I think you are right," said the widow.

"Then we must turn him back."

"But how?"

"Listen, and I will tell you. All he needs is, to be made to think for himself. Just get him into that frame of mind where his love of self-government will lead him aright, and I think the work is done. Now mind you—what I say at this time I mean for Nathan's own ear, and you must not only tell him what I say, but you must also appear to join with me. I am glad to learn that your son has concluded not to make Ellen Montgomery his wife. One of my particular friends will soon offer her his hand; and she will get a good husband and be happy. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do," replied the widow.

After this Aunt Sarah went on and enlarged upon the theme, until her sister was thoroughly posted up.

At supper time Nathan came in, and just before dark his aunt took her leave.

"Mother," said the young man, as they sat by the center-table, "what made Aunt Sarah look so wise and important this evening? She eyed me as though she saw something wonderful about me."

"She had been conversing about you, my son," the widow replied, very quietly.

"I don't suppose she said much good of me," returned Nathan.

"She wishes you well, my dear boy."

"O, yes. All these old maiden aunts do that."

"But your aunt Sarah has a good heart, and good sound sense, you must remember."

"So she has, mother. I will not deny that. But what had she to say about me?"

"Perhaps I ought not to tell you."

"O—tell me; for I would know how much I am indebted to her."

"Well," said Mrs. Burchard, carefully, "she commenced by speaking of Ellen Montgomery."

"That is an old story," returned Nathan, with a show of nervousness.

"Perhaps it may be, but still I think she takes the right view of it."

"Ah? And what may *her* view be?"

"You must not be offended at her speech, my son, for she——"

"Don't be under any apprehension on that account," interrupted the youth. "I am well aware how necessary it is for these poor old maids to have some bone to pick, and I assure you I shall take no offense."

"Well, Nathan, she had heard that you had some thoughts of seeking the hand of Ellen Montgomery, and she was anxious to know if there was any truth in it. I told her there was not."

"And you told her perfectly right, mother."

"Of course I did; and she was very much pleased with the answer."

"Ah—pleased, was she?"

"Yes. She said she had three reasons for being well satisfied. In the first place, she said Ellen ought to have a husband who would be more domestic and social in his habits. Second—she thought you ought to have a wife who would reflect more credit upon your taste for fashion and display, and exhibit your wealth to more advantage. And third—she could now promote the interests of a very dear young friend of hers, who would make Ellen an excellent husband, and for whom she would make a true and loving wife."

"Quite a calculator, my aunt Sarah is," said Nathan, with a smile which appeared to be rather forced.

"But you must remember that she is calculating for the happiness of others, my son."

"O—certainly. But who is this *very dear* friend of hers?"

"She didn't say. She merely remarked that he was an honorable, upright young man, who had loved Ellen for a long time, and who would soon offer her his hand."

"And I suppose Ellen loves him in return?"

"Certainly."

"And I shouldn't be *domestic* enough."

"You know what your aunt means, Nathan. She knows that you want something more brilliant than Ellen would be. She said Ellen would answer just the purpose for one who could only afford to take a wife for the sake of the comforts of his own home, but you would want some one to shine in society. Ellen's homely songs would be ridiculed in select circles, and her plain, humble talk would be quickly eclipsed, and herself put to shame, by a few brilliant sallies from such wits as move in the more favored circles. I am sure your aunt means well, my son."

"You may just inform my aunt from me," said the young man, with some spice in his tone, "that Miss Montgomery's songs are not homely, and that Miss Montgomery's talk is much more sensible than is the talk of some others whom I could name."

"But, my dear boy, you must not be offended. You certainly cannot blame your aunt for wishing the greatest amount of good for her friends. She knows your tastes, and she knows Ellen Montgomery's tastes, and she thinks her plan is best for all concerned, and is much pleased to find that you had already seconded her wishes."

"I am not so easily offended as to notice the whims of a——"

"Remember, she is your mother's sister, Nathan."

"And as such I respect her," said the youth. He opened a newspaper, and having held it before his face for some minutes, he remarked, with an effort to appear careless—

"I suppose Miss Montgomery will soon be made happy."

"I'm sure I hope so," returned the widow. "And I think she will, for Aunt Sarah assures me that the young man not only loves her truly—loves her for the many good qualities she possesses—but that he is generous and true to a fault."

"I am glad she is likely to be so well provided for, I am sure." As Nathan thus spoke he raised the newspaper again, and his mother went on with her sewing.

When the youth found himself alone in his chamber, he began to ponder upon the subject of his late conversation. He spent half an hour in pacing to and fro across his room, and then he went to bed. On the following day he rode out into the country, and came home just in season to attend a select party to which he had a pressing invitation. Sylvia Patten was there, sparkling with jewelry and flashing with wit. She sought Nathan's side, and did her utmost to entertain him. But the young man was in a contemplative mood, and he began to examine and criticise. All the dazzle and show about him was very well for an evening's entertainment, but how would it work for the entertainment of a lifetime? What sort of a companion would one of these girls make for the days of gloom and sadness that might fall upon him in time to come? He went home that night, and spent another half-hour in pacing his floor.

"May I be set down for a fool, if I haven't been rather out of my way in this matter," he muttered to himself. "If my mother tells the truth, I used to give her much trouble when I was very young, by refusing things when they were offered to me, and then crying for them when I could not have them. By the powers, I wish I knew who this fellow is that has put himself in Ellen's way."

By the next day Nathan Burchard had thoroughly convinced himself that he should lose a prize if he lost Ellen Montgomery. At first he had only thought of resisting what he considered Aunt Sarah's unwarrantable interference in his affairs. From this he went on to consider whether he should let the matter drop where it was; but this was not so easy. When came to realize that he might now lose Ellen forever, he opened his eyes. While he had looked upon her as a friend and playmate, with whom he could always be on social terms, and who would always love him as she had loved him from childhood, he felt no uneasiness; but he could not give her wholly up. He could not afford to lose her love. It had been his so long that it had become necessary to his happiness.

"*Homely songs!*" he muttered to himself. "*Plain, humble talk!* By my soul, I'd like to know where Aunt Sarah 'll find anything better! *She* put to shame by brilliant sallies. By heavens, *I* ought to be ashamed if I let that old maid rob me of those songs, and that 'plain, humble talk.' May I be blessed if I don't astonish 'em! I'll do something they little dream of. We'll see who has the management of my affairs!"

That evening Ellen Montgomery and her mother were alone in their tidy sitting-room, both engaged in sewing. Ellen was nineteen years of age, and one of those maidens to be found in nearly every large village—too poor and lovely and good to be reached by the vicious, and not wealthy enough to reach the circle of the favored ones of fortune. She heard a knock at the door, and upon going to answer the summons, she found Nathan Burchard there. He asked her if she would take a walk with him. The evening was calm and beautiful, and she consented.

At the end of two hours they returned, and Nathan went home. Ellen removed her scarf and bonnet, and sat down.

"What is the matter, my darling?" asked Mrs. Montgomery, as she gazed into her daughter's face. "You have been weeping. Alas! you must school yourself to disappointment, my——"

Before the sentence was finished Ellen sprang from her chair and threw her arms around her mother's neck.

"No, no," she murmured, with a burst of joyous, happy tears; "he loves me, dear mamma! He will always love me! He has asked me to be his wife! O—I am very happy!"

And so was the mother happy; and she pressed her daughter to her bosom, and thanked God that the dreaded blow had been averted.

"Nathan," said Mrs. Burchard, on the same evening, "what ails you?"

"Ails me?" returned the youth, looking up from his unread paper. "What do you mean?"

"Why—you seem to have some weighty matter upon your mind, if I might judge from the manner in which you hold your paper."

Nathan glanced at his paper, and saw that it was bottom-side up. He laughed, and giving it a dash upon the table, he cried—

"I may as well out with it, mother. I have proposed for a daughter-in-law, for you. What do you think of that?"

Mrs. Burchard started, and the palor which overspread her face plainly showed that she had some fear.

"I hope you have made a good choice, my son," she finally said.

"*I* think I have, though Aunt Sarah may take offence. The fact is, I have asked Ellen Montgomery to become my wife. I hope you will have no objection."

The widow moved to her son's side, and having placed her arm about his neck and kissed him, she murmured a tearful, heartfelt blessing. Nathan saw that his mother was happy, and he said no more.

In one month from that time Nathan Burchard was married. Aunt Sarah came to the wedding, and she was among the happiest of the happy. She kissed the bride, and she kissed the bridegroom, and made herself merry generally.

"I thought you would be rather disappointed at this arrangement," said the new-made husband, as his aunt made some playful remark to his wife.

"O, no. This suits me exactly," was her reply.

"But where is the young man whom you would have made the husband of my Ellen?"

"That would be telling," returned Aunt Sarah.

"Come," resumed Nathan, turning to his wife; "now that we are married I have a right to know who it was that made love to you."

Ellen seemed bewildered. She gazed first upon her husband, then upon Aunt Sarah.

"She don't know anything about it," the old lady cried. "The match was one of my own secrets. It was a scapegrace nephew of mine that I had selected as her husband."

"Your nephew?" said Nathan, in surprise.

"Yes—my nephew. You see, I knew how such animals must be driven. Just make 'em believe you want 'em to go one way, and they'll be sure to go the other." And as Aunt Sarah spoke she laughed outright.

"Oho—I begin to see through it," exclaimed the nephew. "You have been fixing a yoke on purpose for me."

"Yes, Nathan—I have. And when you tire of wearing it, come and tell me, and I will ask your pardon for what I have done."

Nathan Burchard looked into Ellen's face, and he could find no room in his heart for resentment. After that Aunt Sarah often visited him, but he never was tired of the golden yoke, so the old lady never had occasion to ask his pardon.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. A. G. wants to know "how young authors are to attain fame, if they are not permitted to send voluntary contributions to the LEDGER, or if voluntary contributions are not even so much as read in the LEDGER office?" He also says that "young and unknown authors *have a right to be heard*, and a right of access to the public." Very well; let them *make* themselves heard, then, and let them gain access to the public. We are perfectly willing they should gain fame and fortune, just as we are willing that young persons who seek fame and fortune through other than literary channels should gain the objects of their ambition. It is, of course, none of our business *how* they seek, or *what* they seek, or what they attain, yet we are glad to hear of anybody's success in an honorable pursuit, just as every reasonable human being probably is. But we do not want any apprentices, and young authors have no more claim on us, or on the public, than young brickmakers, or young clerks, or young mechanics of any kind, have. They must take their chance with the rest of mankind. They must fight their way up as best they may. When they shall have *proved themselves*, and shown that they can produce such matter as the public will value, we shall be glad to hear from them; and if we then happen to be in want of contributors, we will pay liberally such of them as we shall see fit to make an arrangement with. But we shall never allow "young authors" to use the LEDGER as a medium for "trying on" their crude productions upon the public. We want no experimenting upon our readers. Nor shall we look over manuscripts that are attempted to be thrust upon us, nor pay any attention to voluntary contributions. We have all the matter we need without them.

TENNICHUCK.—You must submit to your fate like a man. If you are not sufficiently attractive to hold your sweetheart in her orbit, she will of course be drawn off by some one who *for her* has a more powerful attraction. A man is indiscreet to attempt to hold a woman to a promise of marriage, when it is evident that she loves some one else better than she does him, and to marry a woman under such circumstances is utter folly. Nothing but jealousy, coldness, estrangement, hatred, and perhaps crime, can come of such a union. Beside, we should think that any *man*, who is worthy of the name, would feel degraded at the mere thought of marrying a woman whom he knows loves another better than himself. It seems to us that any one who would do such a thing must be a natural sneak as well as a natural fool

E. B. F.—The young man is right. A girl who is engaged to be married has no business to flirt or coquette with young men generally, or to go with any of them to places of amusement. She should go with her husband elect to all such places, except on rare occasions, and when it is agreeable to him to have her go with some one else. Young people of both sexes cannot be too strict in regard to such matters. A very little disregard of the feelings of each other, under such circumstances, will often lead to very sad consequences.

A SUBSCRIBER.—It would not be impertinent or improper to ask an intimate lady friend for her daguerreotype, especially if she had asked for and obtained yours. As to the other part of the question, whether it would be likely to give her offence should you send her the money to pay for the miniature—of *that*, you must judge from your knowledge of her disposition, and the degree of your intimacy with her. As a general thing, it would be quite safe to enclose an ample sum in your letter, to pay expenses.

A KNICKERBOCKER.—In your first assertion you are wrong, and your friend is correct; but in the second you are right, and he is wrong. You can assure him that it *is* customary in many of the towns of Holland, when one of a family is ill, to hang out upon the front door of the house a daily bulletin of the health of the invalid; and, if it be a case of *accouchement*, a board, tastefully ornamented with a fringe of lace or plaited linen, describes the health of mamma and the little one.

MARIA.—You are yourself to blame. In changing your residence from one locality to another, you should bear in mind that there is such a thing as being "too thick to thrive," and not be "too familiar on a short acquaintance." If this is *not* remembered and heeded in your "new home," you will be apt to make new associates with a haste which you will be called upon to repent at leisure, and that bitterly.

W. D.—If you cannot tell which of the girls you love the best, you do not love either of them. True love never mistakes its object. As to their both loving you, we have nothing to say, except that you may find out that you are mistaken in regard to that point. Your letter indicates the possession, on your part, of selfishness and conceit enough to blind any man.

H. E. M.—Does your "flushing of the face" arise from timidity? or is it a merely nervous or constitutional affair? If it is occasioned by the former, you will probably outgrow it; but if, like the toothache, it is a physical affection or disease, we cannot say what will come of it, or how you can overcome it.

C. F. E. D.—We do not help boys to write their compositions. We will say, however, that you need not fear that your school-boy competitors will be able to overthrow Marshal Ney's reputation for courage and military skill. You can launch out on that topic to the full bent of your spirit of hero-worship without fear of successful contradiction.

S. W. F. is anxious to know, in case a minor should indorse a note, and the maker of the note should not pay it, if the minor's father would be responsible for the amount thereof. No; neither he nor the minor would be responsible.

VICTORIA.—If your brother has no good reason for opposing your marriage, you should disregard his opposition. What do your parents say? You should be guided by their counsel, rather than be intimidated by your brother's anger.

EXTINE.—You should be cautious about marrying into a family whose religious belief differs essentially from your own, especially if you are all tenacious in regard to such matters.

CLERICUS.—You should be careful about paying out money for quack medicines or quack remedies of any kind. We will send you the LEDGER one year for $2, which is our regular subscription price.

Z. A.—It is, we believe, an ancient practice revived, that of receiving the benediction in church standing, instead of sitting.

GEORGE.—Pineapples do not grow on trees, but out of the ground, just like cabbages.

MARYLAND says that a widow and her daughter are both desperately in love with a middle aged gentleman, and that the widow sends her daughter off so she can't see the gentleman, and otherwise plays the game of love unfairly, and the question is, what should the daughter do? Yield the conquest and let her mother carry off the prize, or keep up the rivalry as long as she has the slightest chance to gain the gentleman's heart and hand? That is a matter for the young lady to determine for herself. If she really loves the person referred to, and he chooses to offer his hand, she would be justified in accepting it. She must be careful, however, not to manage matters so the gentleman will bestow his hand upon one of them, and his heart upon the other.

A READER says that her husband (whose name we do not give, for obvious reasons) is in the habit of spending most of his time in the company of another lady, to whom he goes and reads the LEDGER, instead of staying at home and reading it to her, although she has always treated him with the utmost kindness and affection; and in regard to this she wants our opinion. We think that a husband who will desert his own fireside and occupy his time in reading to other women, is a miserable scamp. We also think that a woman who will encourage such conduct in a married man, is no better than he is. Just call the attention of your husband and his female friend to this paragraph.

AN ENGLISHMAN.—You are incorrect in regard to the "honorable antiquity" of your country. Virgil once referred to its inhabitants in this manner:—"The Britons, a race almost entirely cut off from the rest of the world." Of course, when he wrote thus, he little thought that that island, insignificant in point of extent, when compared with other countries of Europe, could have attained to that pinnacle of power, to that pre-eminence of arts, in sciences, in arms, which have placed her in the highest rank among the nations of the earth; and that, in greatness, she should far surpass even Rome herself, the then imperial mistress of the world. Times change, and people with them.

A. HALLMAN.—We cannot explain the process of electrotyping to you in a paragraph In *effect*, it is a means of producing plates, by a chemical process, which form a *fac simile* of the paper, and from which we print instead of from the type. *We* preserve these plates, and at any time can print back numbers of the LEDGER from them, so that, since we commenced to electrotype our paper—about two years ago—we can furnish our readers with any number that they may desire. We now have copies of every date since June 7th, 1850, on hand; and when we run out of copies of any date, all we have to do is to put our electrotype plates to press, and print more.

POPLARS.—Two young ladies, that for a long time have been waited upon by a couple of young men, who do not seem inclined to permit the intimacy to go any further than friendship, wish to know if they *ought* to break off the acquaintance, or permit these friendly attentions to be continued. That is a mere matter of taste and discretion, and must be decided by yourselves. If you want to get married, these young men may stand in your way, as others who would like to be your suitors might be deterred by them from approaching you, on the supposition that they are your lovers.

GOLDSBOROUGH.—The "old acquaintance" of the young lady, who stepped between you and her, did a very unmannerly thing; but as you had set out to accompany her to church, you should have continued on, or else have asked her to excuse you. She probably meant no offence in not introducing you to the new-comer. His conduct probably embarrassed her. It is always best to take such things coolly, and ever to keep the feelings in subjection to reason. You had better state the case, just as it occurred, to the young lady's brother, who so kindly introduced you to her.

U. C. C.—It is a matter of no consequence whether people shake hands, or not, when they are introduced to each other. As a general thing, when a gentleman is introduced to a lady, he should wait for her to offer her hand, and if she does not offer it, he should not offer her his. But if the gentleman be some great personage—say the President—then he is the one to offer or withdraw his hand, and the person (whether lady or gentleman) introduced to him must be guided by his actions.

ZERO.—You had better call upon your doctor and state the case to him. You should not allow your little daughter to wear thin shoes; and if your wife "always *will* get such for her," you should buy the shoes yourself. The wearing of thin-soled slippers is probably the cause of her so constantly having colds and coughs. A little inattention in such cases often causes parents to stand weeping around their children's premature graves.

NEPHEW.—It is no mark of a mean spirit in your brother, that he laughs at your rich uncle's pointless jokes. He is probably of a more amiable disposition than yourself, and laughs from a spirit of benevolence, knowing how comfortable it makes the old gentleman feel to have his witticisms appreciated. The reason you never can get at the *cream* of a joke is perhaps owing to your being deficient in the milk of human kindness.

CHARLES W.—You can read law at home, during the first year, as advantageously as you can in a lawyer's office. Kent's Commentaries is the first work you should read. In order to become acquainted with the practice of the courts, you must frequent them during the trial of causes, and copy legal documents until they become as familiar as the letters of your own name.

BROKENHEARTED.—You should have more spirit. When a man for no cause deserts a girl with whom he has been keeping company, she should not run after him, nor make any overtures to him. She should let him go, and be thankful that she has got rid of a fickle and false lover. Send to him for your miniatures by some friend, who will execute the mission properly.

CAROLUS.—Whenever you find that your copy of the LEDGER is defective in the printing, take it back to the newsman of whom you bought it, and he will give you a good copy for it. Any fault in the printing is, of course, ours, and we will take back from newsmen all copies imperfectly printed. Such mistakes will sometimes occur despite the utmost precautions.

SUEZ.—If, as you say, your "spirit of adventure is perfectly irresistible," you had better give it way, and see the world. The East Indies certainly afford an ample field for adventure at this time, but we think its danger is quite equal to its interest. You would do better to turn your attention to some other quarter of the world for a few months.

NEWSBOY.—Yes. Some European ladies take arsenic in very small doses for the purpose of increasing the brilliancy of their complexion and eyes. It kills them at last; and after they have accustomed themselves to the taking of it for a time, it is death to stop, as well as it is to continue the practice.

L. L. Z.—There would be no impropriety in your calling upon a lady who had appointed a meeting with you and been prevented from keeping it, or who had misunderstood the appointment. You might write to her, and make an explanation, if you do not wish to call.

MARGARET.—When you really do not wish a person to call on you again, you might as well not ask him or her to do so. Gentle dignity and frankness in such matters are less displeasing than hypocritical politeness. In fact, *true* politeness is always frank and honest.

LEICESTER.—You should kindly decline to aid your schoolmate in imposing upon his teachers, by translating his exercises for him. If he be offended at your doing so, let him take as much time as he pleases to become good-natured again.

MARY.—The answer to the problem we recently published, in regard to the lady's age, namely, "If my age be multiplied by three, and two-sevenths of the product be tripled, the square root of two-ninths of that product will be four," is 28.

LOLO.—If the surgeon neglected you, or was too unskillful for his profession, and your leg becomes crooked on account of his negligence or bungling, you can sue him for mal-practice, and perhaps get heavy damages against him.

ELDA.—The young man was in the wrong. If he doubted your word, when you told him you was ill, *that* was of itself an insult; and his subsequent conduct was not only impolite but brutal. You should cut his acquaintance.

C. F.—You seem to imagine yourself living in Constantinople, by the manner in which you speak of "young ladies *in market*." You should treat the sex to which your mother belongs with more respect.

SIXTEEN.—Your lover is a villain, or he would never make such a proposition to you. Let him go, by all means; and if he don't go voluntarily, make him go. A man capable of such conduct could not possibly make a good husband.

ELLA.—The recognition of casual acquaintances is purely a matter of taste and personal choice. There is no question of propriety or impropriety involved in it, any more than there is in one's eating or not eating a dinner.

OSWEGO.—If your love-speeches are as rambling and destitute of point as your letter to us, we do not wonder at your non-success. We cannot make out what it is you wish to know.

C. D. R.—We do not make a business directory of the LEDGER. Our space is too valuable to be occupied with "puffs" or advertisements.

REYNO.—You are too desponding. Ask the girl if she will be your wife, and learn the worst, or the best, at once.

EUSTACE.—If you are sure the girl loves you, ask her to be your wife, and have done with your doubts and fears.

J. C. W.—Write to your friend, at his last post-office address. That is the best way to get on track of him.

H. M. H.—No. You can have your subscription to the LEDGER commence with any number you please.

NORWICH.—You should ask the young lady's permission to introduce your friend to her.

J. C. L.—If the young lady will not give up your miniature you cannot get it.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*